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new Masses

SEPTEMBER 1, 1936 15c

Liberty or Death in Spain

MURIEL RUKEYSER

PAUL NIZAN

JAMES HAWTHORNE

★

Hearst and Anti-Semitism

JAMES WALSH

★

Mabel Luhan's Slums

MICHAEL GOLD

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Does everybody *laugh* when you talk Politics?

OR DO they pipe down and drink in your words, aware that here is someone who knows whereof he speaks? It's an important question, because *this is the most critical election campaign since 1860.* For your own good and the good of those you influence, it's up to you to be perfectly clear on such ticklish questions as these:

•

Landon and Hearst call for a balanced budget. Do the Communists oppose this? If so, how can they expect the American people to support their campaign?

•

The Communist election platform contains a social-security plank. How can the Communists hope to get social security under the capitalist system?

When the Communist election platform calls for the defense of the constitutional guarantees of freedom of speech and press, does it mean for fascists, too?

•

Does the Communist Party oppose military preparations? If so, how can it propose that our country enter an international collective-security bloc?

•

Do the Communists think that youth problems are separable from general problems? If not, why does their platform ask for special youth legislation?

•

Because of his stand on relief, etc., will the Communists vote for Roosevelt? If so, aren't they giving up the revolution? If not, aren't they helping Landon?

•

These are some of the questions you'll be called upon to discuss over and over for the next two or three months. Make sure you know how—by filling out the attached coupon NOW!

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New Masses

SEPTEMBER 1, 1936

Molasses Campaign

FOR years, Governor Landon says, he has been sending to Pennsylvania for maple syrup. Last Saturday the governor squared the debt. Pennsylvania got back its syrup with some to spare. Babies were kissed freely, grand aunts were hugged before the eyes of eager reporters, and ancient nurses, laden with anecdotes, emerged from lavender and old lace to prove to the voters that Alf is "just folks."

But Governor Landon knows that a presidential candidate must offer not only sweetness, but light. So in the first major speech of his campaign tour he offered the country a remedy for its ills. It must insist on retaining the "American way of life." By this Governor Landon means the workers' privilege of "facing life with cheerfulness and courage, asking no odds, taking pride in their independence, supporting their families, helping those in need . . . solving their larger problems by voluntary coöperation with their friends and neighbors." He opposes, he says, the "coercive hand of government."

Does Landon regard the slavery of the sharecroppers as the American way—or has he perhaps read of the Emancipation Proclamation? Does he know that only a few hours from where he spoke is the town of Aliquippa, whose 30,000 inhabitants know not the coercive hand of government, but the coercive hand of the Jones & Laughlin Steel Corporation, which completely controls their right to a livelihood, dictates the kind of houses they shall live in and the kind of food they eat, and preserves their "American way of life" by means of its own police force? Of course Landon knows these things. His uncle, Bill Mossman, is publicity man for Jones & Laughlin, and he must have told Alf all about it at the happy family reunion. And the Governor knows, too, that there are counterparts of Jones & Laughlin in every industrial center of the country. It is their owners Landon had in mind when he demanded "freedom of enterprise."

As we go to press, Landon pays lip service to freedom in education. He says he is against teachers' oaths, that teachers have the same political rights as other citizens. He ignores the fact that thirty-five states have criminal syndicalism acts, sedition laws, red-flag laws, and criminal anarchy statutes, under which citizens are arrested for mere membership in Left parties, and that Kansas is one of those states. In urging that the federal government keep out of the public schools, moreover, Landon is fighting against the lending of federal funds for educational purposes. This will hardly be good news to Kansas rural teachers, who get as little as twenty-five dollars a month.

THE COOK WHO CAME UNRECOMMENDED

Sanderson

Trial Balance

AS Civil War in Spain enters its seventh week, there are indications that the conflict may draw out for several months. The insurgents have been able to sustain their movement through their original seizure of strongly fortified defensive positions and through foreign military aid.

But the prolongation of the war will affect the fascist cause more adversely than it will the government. International pressure upon Italy and Germany may diminish the source of aid to the insurgents. Since the war industries and mineral deposits are almost entirely in the regions held by the government, reduced foreign support can prove fatal to the fascists. Then, too, the morale of the reactionary troops, most of them mercenaries, will be shaken much more readily during a long period of fighting than the loyal forces, inspired by the democratic ideal.

In this light, General Franco's renewed announcements of a "big push" on Madrid may be as much a product of desperation as a planned offensive. News from Franco's lines, stressing the unrelenting guerrilla warfare which Andalusian peasants are keeping up against the fascist troops in their rear, makes it all the more apparent that, despite the receipt of bombing squadrons from abroad, the southern insurgents have not even succeeded in consolidating their hold or solidifying their lines of communications in the region of Seville.

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The Trotsky Cesspool

ONCE Leon Trotsky had embarked upon the theory of Thermidor, the descent to hell was easy. If, as he reasoned, Stalin was "betraying" the revolution, ushering in Bonapartism, then for Trotsky, as for that petty-bourgeois intellectual, Ivan Karamazov, immortalized by Dostoievsky, "everything was permitted." Trotskyism plus terrorism, Zinoviev explained to the court which tried him last week, equals fascism. Karl Radek, writing in *Izvestia,* gave further details. First Trotsky's plot in 1928 to establish an anti-Soviet center abroad. Then, in 1929, instructions to his agents to assault and rob Soviet commercial representatives abroad. Then, in 1931, the conspiracy to assassinate Soviet leaders. Out of these vile conspiracies came Sergei Kirov's murder, organized and carried out by the Trotsky-Zinoviev-Kamenev gang. Finally, the repeated plots to kill Stalin, Voroshilov, Kaganovich, Ordjonikidze, and other Soviet leaders.

This might sound fantastic if Trotsky had not shown himself time and again to be a fantastic adventurer. There was also the admission which Kamenev and Zinoviev made after Kirov's assassination that they were "morally" implicated in that cold-blooded murder of a beloved working-class leader.

But all this cumulative evidence, circumstantial in its nature, has been overshadowed by the dramatic confessions of Kamenev, Zinoviev, and other accomplices of Trotsky at last week's trial in Moscow. That trial was held in open court. It was attended by correspondents of the New York *Times,* the *Herald Tribune,* the Associated Press, the United Press, and by a representative of the United States embassy. The murderers of Kirov and the would-be murderers of Stalin confessed their heinous guilt before the entire world.

Kamenev explained the motives of the terrorists: "We understand that the completely victorious policy of the Party leadership has been recognized by the masses. We could not reckon on a split in the leadership, either. Two paths remained. Either complete and honest abandonment of the struggle against the Party, or to continue it without counting on any mass support, without a political platform and without a banner."

From this degenerate, counter-revolutionary madness there followed murder plots in direct connivance with the Nazi Gestapo, plots guided, as Kamenev admitted, "by unlimited bitterness against the Party leaders and the country, and by the thirst for power, a power to which we were once close, and from which we were thrown by the course of historic development."

Leon Trotsky, the unscrupulous adventurer who engineered the murder plots, naturally denies all guilt. But only a complete idiot or an out-and-out counter-revolutionary could believe that Kamenev, Zinoviev, and their fourteen fellow-criminals tried in open court would deliberately face the firing squad merely to malign Trotsky. The confessions are there; Trotsky's guilt is there. His bitter and malicious struggle against communism and against the Soviet Union has had its logical outcome. Soviet democracy has triumphed over the plots of its self-confessed enemies, whose last words in court were penitence for their crimes and praise for the party they betrayed, and its leader, Stalin.

Forging Ahead

AMERICA'S People's Front moved a lot nearer to reality last week. No recent political development has been more significant or more heartening than the decision of the powerful Farmer-Labor Association of Minnesota and the Farmer-Labor Progressive Federation of Wisconsin to unite in a "unified national Farmer-Labor Party for the congressional campaign of 1938 and the presidential campaign of 1940."

Here is no spurious Farmer-Labor Party pulled out of a priest's hat to dazzle the masses while reaction picks their pockets. It is a party of genuine liberals, experienced in politics and in office. The Wisconsin federation includes such groups as the State Federation of Labor, Progressive Party of Wisconsin, Farm Holiday Association, Farmers Equity Union, Workers Alliance, Farmer-Labor Progressive League, Socialist Party of Wisconsin, and the Wisconsin Milk Pool.

The new alignment, which will work to build up and unite farmer-labor groups throughout the country, follows by ten days the formation of Labor's Non-Partisan League, which likewise has an eye on 1940. These two centers of mass resistance to reaction are still far apart. The Wisconsin-Minnesota group is committed to a program of production for use; the League, which is most concerned at the moment with aiding the reëlection of Roosevelt, has yet to formulate a specific program. Nevertheless, it too looks forward to a new political alignment and the possible formation of a nation-wide progressive party after the presidential elections.

These two broad formations, moreover, have much in common. They represent labor's first major attempt to organize along national political lines. Both are fully aware that Landon and his supporters are the darkest threat to labor in the present campaign. Both recognize Lemke for the fake that he is and will have none of him and his Coughlin-sponsored party.

The eventual merging of such authentically American mass movements means death to fascism in this country. For only in such a union is there power enough to blast forever out of American political life the Hearsts, the Coughlins, the Gerald K. Smiths, the James Trues.

Progressive Catholicism

CATHOLICS who squirm at the vicious antics of Father Coughlin may take comfort in the vigorous stand of Michael Williams, editor of the Catholic *Commonweal.* As though in answer to the furious Red-baiting and anti-Semitism of the Detroit priest, Mr. Williams told a congress at St. Francis Xavier University in Nova Scotia that not communism but fascism is the "black beast" that threatens America. "I glory," he said, "in the heroism of the Communists. It is their spirit we Catholics want." And as a final thrust at the demagogue in priest's robes, Mr. Williams declared: "If we cannot be brothers to the Jews we had better give up pretending to be Christians."

Among Catholics, as among every other religious and national group, there are democrats and there are reactionaries. There are those, like Bishops Schrembs and Gallagher, who glory in the brutal tyranny of Mussolini and in the slimy maneuvering of Father Coughlin; and there are those, like Father McGowan in Washington and Michael Williams, who fight for decency and social progress. The Popular Front of France has the active backing of such noted Catholic leaders as Jacques Maritain. And in Spain, despite the horror stories arising out of a well-grounded bitterness toward a corrupt and blackly reactionary clergy,

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so outstanding a Catholic philosopher as Bergamin speaks out for the Madrid government and Father Morales leads a group of ardent religionists in defense of the republic. The contribution of progressive Catholics is vital in the fight of the American people against fascism—a struggle that calls for the united efforts of all men of genuine good will.

When In Rome . . .

WILLIAM RANDOLPH HEARST has a formula. It is designed to prevent the unionization of Hearst newspapers by discharging active union men, to smash strikes with armed hoodlums, and to use his vast propaganda machine to portray strikers as "terrorists."

In Seattle, the formula failed. Two Newspaper Guild members, discharged from Hearst's *Post-Intelligencer* for "incompetence" and "insubordination" after years of service, have been backed up by a strike of editorial workers. Teamsters, longshoremen, lumbermen, other unions have joined the picket line. Printers refused to enter the plant. For ten days the *Post-Intelligencer* has not appeared. The governor of Washington, the mayor of Seattle refuse to act against the right of workers to strike. The Central Labor Union has placed the Hearst paper on the unfair list.

Hearst is reaping the harvest of his anti-labor, union-baiting policies. His formula is impotent against union solidarity. Regrettably, some A.F. of L. officials have rushed to Hearst's aid, particularly William Green. Charles Howard and George L. Berry, industrial unionists opposed to the splitting tactics practiced by Green, mistakenly feel that they were bound by their unions' craft contracts to wire commands that the printers pass through the picket lines. This action is not only ill-advised but extremely dangerous. Labor can be served only by emphasizing its solidarity, when any section of labor is fighting for the right to organize.

From fascist Italy, where he is "consulting" Mussolini, Hearst wires:

> The time to stop mob rule of communism is before it gains control of state and nation: not afterward, like poor, prostrate Spain. . . . There is the issue of a free press and a free country. . . . No press is free that is subject to mob rule.

The old formula again. The constitutional right to strike against unbearable working conditions and low pay, the right to organize, cannot be defeated by calling the Newspaper Guild "communists" nor can it be defeated by crocodile tears for "poor, prostrate Spain." The workers' defense of democracy against fascism in Spain has no worse enemy than the Hearst press, which glorifies that fascist assault on liberty, which perverts and fabricates news whose purpose it is to destroy democracy. Hearst brings gangsters to Seattle and calls names from Rome in his fight against organized labor. Thus he points out to labor one of its most essential and urgent duties: Smash Hearst!

Showdown in Mexico

CRAFTY Portes Gil, whose loyalty to the progressive administration of Lazaro Cardenas has never been beyond question, has resigned as chairman of the National Revolutionary Party, the governing party of Mexico. As a move to further divide the P.N.R. and to promote friction with the government itself, his resignation dovetails with the seditious activities of ex-dictator Calles and of the motley assortment of reactionaries in Mexico which has openly opposed General Cardenas.

Too little is known in the United States of Cardenas's record as President —the source of Rightist hostility toward him. In labor disputes, Cardenas, unlike former chief executives, has refrained from imposing compulsory arbitration, a procedure favorable to the employers alone. Labor's rights have been respected even where this may have caused irritation to powerful foreign monopolies. The government has given land and agricultural credits to tens of thousands of needy peasants, appreciably hastening the Agrarian Reform. It has fostered secular education. Its enlightened foreign policy has given it a unique place in the bourgeois world—Mexico has had the temerity to grant the Spanish government such treatment as is normally accorded a legally constituted and friendly government.

On the whole an admirable record, but not so in the eyes of wealthy landowners and the foreign companies, intent on despoiling Mexico's wealth. These have encouraged the depredations of terroristic clerical bands in rural communities. Employers, headed by American concerns, have organized to resist governmental commitments which are favorable to the trade unions. Gold Shirt hoodlums, whose Hitlerite chieftain, Nicolas Rodriguez, has just been deported to El Paso, Texas,

New Masses

VOL. XX, No. 10 CONTENTS SEPT. 1, 1936

Editorial Comment 3
The Last Refuge.....Robert Forsythe 7
Liberty Versus Death in Spain
"We Shall Conquer," Says President Azaña.....Paul Nizan 8
Spain Calls Forth the French Front James Hawthorne 8
Barcelona on the Barricades Muriel Rukeyser 9
Mabel Luhan's Slums.....Michael Gold 11
Hearst and Anti-Semitism...James Walsh 14
Teachers Unite Against Reaction Malcolm Winter 17
The Equilibrists and Mr. Keynes Edward Mount 18
Lost Prairie.....Nathan Asch 20
Our Readers' Forum..... 22
Review and Comment
Socialism and Solitude..Milton Howard 23
The Tradition of the People Archibald MacLeish 25
Wisdom and Insight..Granville Hicks 27
Two Views of Imperialism Isidor Schneider 28
Brief Reviews 29
The Screen.....Peter Ellis 29
Theatrical Notes 29
Between Ourselves 30
Drawings by Sanderson, Joyce, Mackey, Kruckman, I. Klein, Ernie, Russin, Thompson, Serrano, Semyon.

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continue to provoke disorder. Rightist intrigue is proceeding among army officers.

But in Mexico the plans of the reaction need not mature as far as they have in Spain. If the president meets disaffection on the Right with greater reliance upon the democratic masses and their organizations, he can cope successfully with the counter-revolution.

And, unless Cardenas is intimidated by the Right, the exit of Portes Gil, making for increased unity within the government and removing a brake on its progressive course, may well prove a boon to the Mexican nation.

Nazi Terror in New York

NO longer is it necessary for Americans to travel to Germany to confirm personally the Nazi brand of organized sadism. Last Friday midnight before the *Bremen* sailed from its New York pier the gay hubbub of a typical bon voyage crowd was split by a woman's scream. Above the shocked hesitation that followed could be heard guttural cursing and then other cries and screams of protest from a dozen different parts of the German liner. Visiting New Yorkers and those newspapermen who had come down to the city pier for a last interview with Max Schmeling saw then, all too clearly, what was happening.

Demonstrators on the pier and on the ship had unfurled banners and held them aloft. They bore the words: "Stop Nazi Intervention in Spain." Others cried for justice for Simpson, the Nazi-imprisoned American seaman. A small group on the ship chanted "Hands off Spain!" They echoed what even the capitalist press of America had been shouting from its headlines for the past few weeks.

Then, with a vicious and complete disregard of all human decency, the officers of the *Bremen* and the hired blackguards on the Hapag pier tore into the throng. Reporters, visitors, demonstrators were alike to them in their fury. Kicking and pushing and striking with their clubs, they tried to clear the crowded pier.

On the great ship, eye-witnesses and newspapermen saw white-uniformed officers lay about them with blackjacks. A few women demonstrators held to the railings, shouting their slogans of justice and fair play. They were ganged by stewards and officers, beaten unmercifully until they could no longer stand, and then carried away to the brig to be flung on its steel floor.

Prosperous and well-dressed Americans were kicked off the dock; their gay farewell parties turned into a shambles. Before leaving in their autos or cabs, they stood indignantly about the pierhead. Some of the women were hysterical. For they had seen part of New York suddenly gone Nazi.

Unify Against Japan

ONLY war by a united China can settle her differences with Japan, Dr. Hu Shih, well known philosopher, said to a reporter in California, where he heads the Chinese delegates to the Pacific Relations Conference. "Unification of China is 90 percent complete." Dr. Hu thought the Chinese Communists would join forces with the government "as soon as China is faced with the necessity of open resistance."

While Dr. Hu was speaking, Japanese Ambassador Kawagoe was putting pressure on the puppet regime in North China to break economic ties with Nanking and permit further Japanese penetration on the pretext of suppressing Communism. Seventy-two Japanese warships were in the Chinese harbor of Amoy.

Certainly China is already "faced with the necessity of open resistance." Yet Chiang Kai-shek, instead of obstructing the path of the invaders with all his troops, moved his major forces into the extreme south to threaten civil war while others in the west campaigned against the Chinese Red Army—an odd method of attaining further unity, or coöperating with admittedly patriotic forces.

Chiang insists that unification of China must precede resistance to Japan. By contrast, the Chinese Communists call for anti-Japanese action by all the Chinese people as the surest way to unity.

C.I.O. Progress

WILLIAM GREEN stays awake nights thinking of new ways to split the labor movement. His latest effort is in the form of a warning to all city central labor bodies supporting the C.I.O. that they face suspension and confiscation of their property.

The truth is that Green is out on a limb. Craft union after craft union has endorsed the C.I.O.'s position and protested the threatened expulsion. Longshoremen, sailors, lumber workers, rubber and auto unions, painters and electricians have gone on record against the action of the Executive Council. Green's New York toady, Joseph P. Ryan, head of the Central Trades and Labor Council, had to end a recent session of the council an hour early because members protested his support of Green. Philadelphia's central labor body has condemned the high-handed treatment of the C.I.O. Jersey City, Chicago, Akron, San Francisco — all through the country—Green is faced with recrimination and revolt. The Amalgamated Clothing Workers has subscribed $100,000 to the C.I.O. fund. The Hotel and Restaurant Employees International, with a membership of 100,000, has voted unanimously to request the Executive Committee to withdraw its suspension order.

At the same time, the C.I.O. strengthens its position. Eighty-five company-union delegates from the steel mills support the organization drive. Victories, through C.I.O. coöperation, have been won by 2,500 workers of the Simmons Bed Co., and by steel workers of the Atlantic Foundry in Akron. With C.I.O. assistance the United Auto Workers have doubled their membership to 90,000 in three months and the United Rubber Workers have increased their membership by 700 percent. Soon not even Green can blind himself to the fact that the C.I.O. is American unionism in its most progressive and vigorous stage.

Peonage in Arkansas

THE Arkansas cotton choppers realized that they faced terror and death when they dared to strike for higher wages. It cost the life of Charlie Weems, Negro organizer, and the abduction and flogging of Mrs. Willie Sue Blagden and Rev. Claude Williams to win the strike. Violence ruled, but the cotton choppers won a wage of a dollar a day and promise of a federal investigation of existing conditions of peonage.

Those to be investigated are politically powerful. They control the courts and the state government. Their hope is to see to it that the federal action remains perfunctory and meaningless. But in Klan-ridden Florida, mass resentment forced the conviction of Klan members of the police force for the flogging and murder of Eugene Poulnot. Similar pressure can convict the slave-driving growers now terrorizing Arkansas.

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The Last Refuge

ROBERT FORSYTHE

PATRIOTISM seems to be changing. In the days when Doctor Johnson referred to it as the last refuge of a scoundrel, it is unlikely that he had in mind such spectacles as Spain or France today. The most he could imagine was that professional patrioteers capitalized upon flag waving and hero-mongering. Even at the worst he would probably have agreed that a patriot was one who revered his native land and would fight to the death for it.

The first break came after the Bolshevik revolution in Russia. The whole point of the support of the Allied Powers for the Provisional government of Kerensky was his determination to continue the war against Germany. The menace of the Hun was something which no patriot and no decent human being could avoid fighting. If Germany won, civilization would perish. The czarist generals were sure of this; the elite knew that culture would perish if *Kultur* triumphed. The most potent weapon against the Bolsheviks was the charge that they were German agents. No patriotic Russian could remain content while an inch of Russian territory remained in the hands of the barbarian Teutons.

After the dictated peace at Brest-Litovsk, a strange phenomenon was noted. The White army of General Krasnov was being supported by the Germans. Since the Germans were never noted for philanthropy, it was never denied that in the event of the overthrow of the Bolsheviks the Germans would remain in those portions of Holy Russia where their armies then rested. In short, the monarchists of Russia were far more anxious to defeat their proletarian brothers of Russia than to oust their traditional enemy. Better a foreign conqueror than the wrong sort of Russians running the country.

The Germans occupied the Ukraine, the border countries of Esthonia, Latvia, Poland, Lithuania—all of western Russia from a line starting in the north at Narva, near Petrograd, to Tiflis in the south. It was a pretty slice of their beloved land, but the czarists could stand it if it meant the end of the Bolsheviks. The English were also helping in their disinterested way, wanting only that portion of the south which contained the oil regions around Batum. The French were equally kind, being willing to do anything possible to help a good cause if they profited sufficiently well in the process. In the east Japan was slicing off Sakhalin and moving menacingly toward the district east of Baikal, while the lost legions of Czechoslovakia were willing to take practically the whole land off the hands of the Reds if they wearied of it. In that wild *mélange* of Bolshevism versus the White armies, assisted by the capitalistic powers of the world, the only patriotic forces were those of the Reds. The czarists, the reactionaries, the bandits and brigands, and sweet voices of reason were willing to cut Russia down to the size of Rhode Island if it meant they could be in control of the remainder after the operation.

The present situation in Spain parallels that experience exactly. With that splendid effrontery which is always so charming in the upper classes, the Spanish rebels under Franco and Mola and Gil Robles and Juan March are very strong in their patriotism and reveal it by their willingness to slice off attractive portions of their beloved native land in payment for help from Germany and Italy. If the Italians would like the Belearic Islands and Cueta across the straits from Gibraltar, who are the kindly monarchists of Spain to deny the wants of a friend? If Germany should happen to like the contour of Catalonia, that, too, could be arranged. If there happens to be nothing left after the saving, that will be but an incident. Better slavery under Hitler than democracy under Azaña or Prieto or Caballero or Diaz. If there is one thing a sterling Spanish patriot cannot abide, it is Spain in the hands of the wrong Spaniards.

The case of France is even more entrancing. For centuries there has been one enemy for the French, the Germans. There were the wars of the Middle Ages, the Napoleonic wars, the war of 1870, the World War. The soil of France is inviolate. Alsace-Lorraine must be restored. The world must be made safe for democracy. The Hun must be crushed. If the Boche does not pay his indemnity the Ruhr must be occupied. The peace treaty must be followed to the last comma, for time eternal. Poincaré will see to that, Tardieu will see to that. Laval will see to that. All good patriotic Frenchmen will see to it. De la Rocque will see to it. . . . But will he? Who is this we see now conferring so intimately with Herr Hitler? Who is it who is being so friendly with the fascist Mola at Burgos? Patriotic Frenchmen of the Croix de Feu! But, surely, messieur . . . it cannot be! Can it be possible that these defenders of the faith, these ardent lovers of French culture and haters of Boche *Kultur* are to open the gates to Hitler and his hordes? Exactly and with pleasure. La belle France, which has withstood the assaults of the nations of Europe, is to invite the visit of Der Führer, who will of course depart as soon as he has set matters aright, asking in return for his assistance only such stray portions of the country as may not be further needed by the French. Better France in the grasp of Hitler than in the hands of the wrong French.

In a strange way it might seem that the upper classes are more class conscious than patriotic, but this cannot be, for the 200 Families have always been known for the intensity of their devotion to their country and to their God. It must, of course, be for the glory of God. If it will make God content, the 200 Families and their friends will be happy to turn France over to that God-fearing man, Herr Hitler. If it will satisfy God, Señor Franco will allow his Moslem troops to massacre all the Christian citizens of a captured town. If it will bring joy in Heaven, Lord Beaverbrook and Lord Rothermere will gladly turn the British Empire over to Signor Mussolini.

Patriotism. . . . What a noble word! My country, right or wrong, except when it happens to be in the hands of my fellow countrymen who have foolishly voted the type of country they think they want. In that case . . . my class, right or wrong, and death to my country!

"If we had kept prohibition we could repeal it now to cure the drought." *Joyce*

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LIBERTY VERSUS

"We Shall Conquer," Says President Azana

PAUL NIZAN

MADRID.

THIS morning I saw President Azaña in one of those pink-and-grey palaces from which, one day in 1931, Alfonso XIII fled.

Manuel Azaña is weary. For days he has had little sleep, working tirelessly. In these great salons with gold trimmings, generals with red belts and Cabinet ministers are leaning over maps of the battlefront.

Don Manuel is at work. This writer, this orator who became a statesman, is today a leading combatant in the struggle against fascism. He has forgotten his sombre adolescence in the Escurial, his nonchalant conversations in the *Ateneo,* his evenings in political cafés. Now he lives only for the war.

The president said to me, "Now, only now, is monarchy falling in Spain. This did not happen in 1931. Victory will be the renaissance of Spain. The combat is now on a far vaster scale than in 1808, far broader than our war of independence against Napoleon.

"I do not believe in the intellectuals; I do not believe in the technicians; I do not believe in the politicians, of whom I am one. I trust only our people. Our people are revealing majestic heroism. On the Guadarrama front the militia refuses to take its wages. Listen to this story. A few days ago someone asked to see me. My secretary received him, but he insisted upon coming to me. I asked him in. It was a peasant from Ollias del Rey, wounded in the head and chest, his belt full of shotgun shells. He had come from the front and he was going back. He said to me: 'I have only shotgun shells which I use for hunting, I know that I am doing to die. But before I left I wanted to see the president of the republic to offer him this cigar.' "

"And the war?" I asked.

"We shall conquer. Only we must take the offensive. This is the lesson which we have learned in the last few days. In Madrid there were thousands of 'those gentlemen' in the radio station and in the barracks of La Montaña. I had only three artillery officers and three 15-centimeter field-pieces. And in spite of the odds against us we conquered because we took the initiative. We did not follow those moderate men who wanted to negotiate with 'them.' "

Through a salon window which looked out upon an immense Castilian landscape the president pointed to clouds of smoke rising from the distant mountain-tops.

"A forest fire which the rebels have set. Do you see this smoke? There, our destiny and yours is being decided."

Spain Calls forth the French Front

JAMES HAWTHORNE

PARIS.

A SUDDEN terror aroused by the danger of fascist encirclement has reached down into the depths of France. As more and darker evidences of Nazi and Italian support of the Spanish counter-revolution come to light, even elements hostile to the Popular Front shrink from the menace of war. France is in danger! A Fascist victory in Spain, it is becoming increasingly apparent here, would simply provide the necessary strategic advantages to Hitler and Mussolini for immediate opening of hostilities on a world scale.

"Des avions à l'Espagne!"—"Planes to Spain!" Such is the blunt and direct solution the workers and farmers of the Front Populaire propose. "Des canons pour l'Espagne!" Twenty thousand fighters for peace pour into the subways and streets as the pro-Spain meeting at the Vel' d'Hiv' comes to a ringing conclusion. "Arms, arms, arms!" the Socialist writer Jean Richard Bloch had shouted into the microphone. And, "Des armes pour l'Espagne; des munitions pour l'Espagne," shout the crowds at the subway stations. Late-returning workers, men going on night shift, and sympathizers who were not at the meeting take up the cry: "Vive l'Espagne anti-fasciste!"

While the Blum government endeavors, through diplomatic negotiations for "neutrality," to prevent the Spanish conflict from developing into a world war, the Popular Front itself has already adopted a more realistic position than reliance on the promises of Hitler and Mussolini. Local Popular Front meetings, factory assemblies, inter-party conferences send huge donations to the cause of the people of Spain. With the subscription lists come resolutions demanding arms for Spain. "Why lock the stable when the horse is gone?" the resolutions demand with reference to neutrality agreements. The Spanish Foreign Legion has been sending reinforcements to the Peninsula with the aid of protecting air transport provided by Germany and Italy. The visit of the *Deutschland* to Morocco, the landing of German sailors in Seville, the visit of the *Deutschland's* commander to General Franco speak for themselves. "Neutrality" does not prevent aggression under the guise of a demand for "guarantees and damages." Such a demand has already been made by Germany in an amazing case of crocodile tears over the fate of four refugees from Hitlerism who died fighting against the fascists in the ranks of the Catalonian anti-fascist militia!

A whole German fleet supplemented by Italian war vessels polices the coasts of Iberia for a price. And the price scares all of France: (1) German military position in Morocco; (2) German-Italian bases in the Balearic Islands. With new Mediterranean bases, with fascist military roads on three sides of France and on the other the deep blue sea furrowed by fascist men-of-war, what could delay the attack? France is in danger; the world is in danger!

Against this peril, whose gravity is so deeply felt in France that the very air is tense, the Communists have come forward with a new plan. "French Front, French reconciliation." A welcome for those who, while unable to support the whole program of the People's Front, are yet anxious to fight the menace of Hitlerism. That is the meaning of Front Francais.

"A front of the people of France, heir and executor of the great revolution, against the front of the contemporary Coblenz," explained Maurice Thorez for the Communists as he introduced the new plan. "A French Front in our people's heroic tradition of struggle for liberty, marching to the strains of the "Marseillaise" of 1792 fused with our "Internationale" beneath the flag of Valmy and the red flag of the Commune. A truly French Front against the anti-French front of treason."

Already the French Front has begun to mobilize, tightening all lines against the passage of arms and materials to the Spanish fascists. Watching the battles in Spain with the conviction that they are witnessing the preparation of a war against France, many former victims of Croix de Feu demagogy are shocked at the "neutrality" propaganda of Colonel de la Rocque's allies: Kerillis, Bailby, Doriot, Maurras. "Neutrality in a battle between a democratically elected republican government and an armed minority of dissenters protecting selfish interests?" they ask incredulously. With Indalecio Prieto, they remark: "The ways of diplomacy have always been mysterious to me, but 'neutrality' in such a case is an indirect recognition of the trouble-makers' government."

Today there was a tremendous gathering at St. Cloud for the Festival of Peace.

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DEATH IN SPAIN

Leon Blum and Jean Zay for the government and for the Socialist Party, Jacques Duclos for the Communists, Leon Jouhaux for the C.G.T. trade unions, General Pouderoux, recently returned from the United States, Arthur Henderson, visiting British parliamentarian, and representatives of numerous powerful organizations, were permitted to feel the temper of the French masses. In reply to every formula there rose the simple, stubborn response: "Des avions pour l'Espagne." From the platform one line met their full approval: "We want neither intervention nor misconceived neutrality."

On every hand there is supreme confidence that the Spanish republic can win alone against the fascists even though the latter were prepared and the former unready. One instance of this preparedness has been vaunted in the French fascist press. The German colony of the island of Majorca, under the direction of Kurt von Behr, former Gestapo agent at London, having prepared for three months, has now organized a complete military defense of the island against the Spanish Government. Opposed to this preparedness is the fact that the distribution of arms to the workers and peasants was simply helter-skelter for fully a week after the coup began. With such disadvantages the government was nevertheless able to assume the offensive everywhere and to retain or retake the most important strategic centers.

Without intervention the counter-revolution has no hope. But there has been intervention. The twenty-eight German and unknown number of Italian planes landed in Morocco, the millions of pesetas, the patrolling of the fleets, the demands for damages: all these constitute material pressure on the republic. Therefore it is too late to talk of "neutrality," and the national sentiments of the least radical forces in the French population awaken them to warn the government against "misconceived neutrality."

"Des avions pour l'Espagne," echoed from 20,000 voices in the Velodrome d'Hiver a few nights ago. Beneath that roar an insistent conversation went on by my side. A young Socialist eagerly questioned a Catalan from the French side of the Pyrenees. "I am a machine-gunner," the man from Perpignan declared. "If the Spanish embassy refuses me safe-conduct, I know the mountain passes!"

"Take me with you," begged the Socialist. "Look, I have my military service book. It's very little, I know, but they are arming untrained women there. Surely I can do as much as a woman!"

"Des armes pour l'Espagne!" The millions of France are awake and ready to bear arms against fascism. They need not cross the frontier. Much of the defense of the Spanish Republic, and the main burden of world defense against international fascist meddling in Spain, fall today upon the French people. That it will meet its obligations is best indicated by the remarkable growth that has rewarded the Communist Party's sponsorship of the Popular Front and French Front. Around its 225,000 members and 78,000 youth revolves the Front Populaire, which like a snowball with the Socialist-Communist united front at its core, attracts new strata of the French people at each turn, rolling up the great French Front.

Barcelona on the Barricades

MURIEL RUKEYSER

Francisca Solano, known in Madrid as "the heroine of Espinar." On the afternoon of July 24 the militia column which she had joined was sent into action to defend Madrid. It was ambushed in the village of Espinar and Francisca was unaccounted for after the engagement. It became known later that she had been captured by fascist troops while tending a wounded comrade.

WHEN the Paris express changed at the frontier into a Spanish train which stopped at even the smallest stations, and later, when the military guard on the train and the workers' guard on the Moncada station covered the train with their guns, nobody, of all the tourists and visitors and athletes going to the Barcelona Workers' Olympiad, knew what was happening.

I had been sent to cover the First People's Olympiad in Barcelona by the London magazine, *Life and Letters Today*. It was to be the great anti-Nazi celebration of the workers' sport clubs of Europe and America, the retort to Hitler Olympics, a week of united front games, theater, festival. The games were to start that evening, with a torchlight procession through Barcelona.

The guidebook says, "There is nothing in Moncada that need detain the tourist, who would do well to proceed to the capital, Barcelona." Some of us got out and looked at the town. The Catalonians had settled down to bread and sausages, wine and peaches and almonds. The tourists were noticeably flustered: an express train that stops for two hours at an insignificant way station!

In the town, a *camion* of young boys, most of them no more than seventeen years old, was leaving for Barcelona. We heard there had been a tremendous battle, starting that morning with an attack on the telephone building, and continuing through the day. The generals, the priests, the wealth of the country, had risen against the people and a people's left-wing government, uniting with the Carlists in a savage attempt to make a fascist, if not a monarchist, Spain.

The *camion* went off. The boys stood quite still as it left the town. They had said they were Anarchists. One of the athletes clenched his fist in greeting. One of the mothers screamed, begging her son not to go. No two of their guns matched: old firearms, hunting rifles, revolvers. The *camion* went down the road to Barcelona, its radio playing Beethoven's Fifth Symphony.

During the afternoon, rumors ran through the train, the beginning of days of contradictory news: the army would put this down by nightfall, it was an Anarchist uprising, 2000 had been killed at Barcelona, the tracks were torn up, it was a Communist uprising, the government could put it down immediately, the train would move during the eveing, the train would move at seven o'clock.

Only these things became certain: the wires were down, no communication was possible; the train lying dead in the station, with the town promenading on the platform and the little children climbing trees to look

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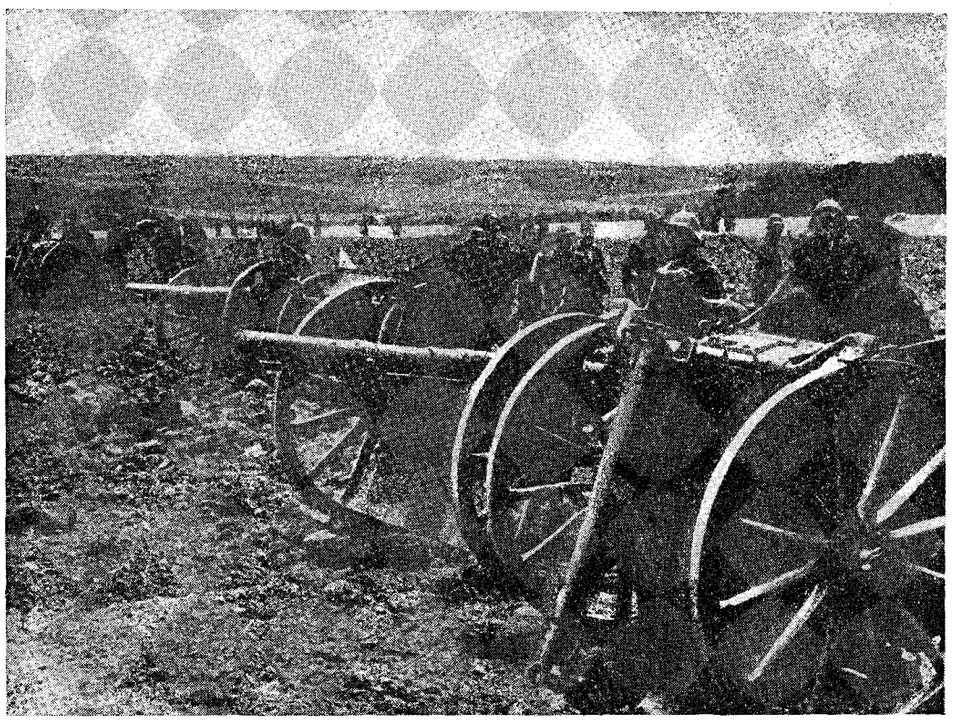

A government field battery in the Guadarrama Mountains

in the windows, was the one neutral place in town.

At dinner-time, men came walking back from the battle in Barcelona, fifteen miles away. A bus-driver walked in with his wounded brother and their families, carrying stories of the tremendous battle; now we could hear the roll of artillery-fire growing ever louder in the hills. The hill-pocket around Moncada is on the direct line to the frontier—the direct line of retreat for the fascists, who were broken after the day's fierce fighting, scattered and driven into hiding in the city or the hills.

In the evening, the Americans set up a train committee to take a message of sympathy and thanks for the town's courtesy and a small collection to the Mayor. The town had been very kind; the only search made was for cameras and photographs of armed civilians, and that had frightened only a few people on their way to the bull-fights; those who did not agree with the sympathies of the message said cheerfully that it was politic and would insure them a quiet night. The chorus of six platinum blondes who were to have opened in Barcelona that night were heartbroken but soothed. The professor from Madrid translated our message into Spanish, and we took it into the town.

Moncada is usually quiet, I suppose, but during these nights the radio, the sign that the government was still in power, roared from the cafés; war news, bulletins, the death of General Sanjurjo, the broadcast forced on the fascist general, after his capture. We took the note to the major, who refused it. He said it was too important for him; to take it to the secretariat. The committee received it in a hot, bright room with the picture of Luis Companys, president of Catalonia, looking down. We were not then allowed to express sympathies; we were foreign nationals, and it was correct that we keep out of revolutionary situations. We went back to sleep on the seats of the Madrid-Saragossa-Alicante line.

Waking at 4:45 next morning to the brief sharp sounds of rifle-fire crackling in the hills, we were out on the platform in time for the deep detonation that meant the church had been bombed. Five fascist officers had been executed that morning; some said they had died cravenly, others that they had died bravely.

Other rumors flew about. But all the reports tallied to one sum: the fascists were retreating through the hills.

Trucks loaded with guns and ammunition hurried through the town, carrying the painted initials of their trade-union organizations, or of the Anarchists. A machine-gun rolled through after the milk-wagon. A Red funeral was held. The train was given an hour and a half to buy provisions, and was ordered to shut itself in—the fascists were expected.

All day there was shooting and chase in the hills. A shot smacked against the tile roof of a peasant's house; almost before I could turn, the inhabitants were inside, piling furniture against the doors and windows. "There has been fighting before," they said, walled into the little house, "but never like this."

That evening the first plane passed overhead as we all stood watching before the schoolhouse, which had been allotted to us. It came out from over the hills, where short men with sandals and black sashes and rifles were hunting fascists; it was impossible to tell whether the plane was friend or fascist, scout or bomber. After a terrible, long minute it passed harmlessly overhead.

And that night the *Guardia Civil* was stationed to protect the train while machine-gun fire clattered in the town.

Moncada, being just outside Barcelona, is afflicted with absentee landlordship, and a row of imposing houses facing the station are owned by Fascist sympathizers who live in the capital. A small group of armed citizens entered these houses, forcing the locks or going in by the windows, to collect weapons. There was not a sign of thievery or the looting that has been reported. One little boy about six years old ran down the street with three towels under his arm. His mother caught him halfway down, spanked him soundly, and came back with the towels and a noisy scolding for the leader who had permitted it.

Watching uneasily from the windows of the stifling train, the tourists felt it was time to be going. The English started to organize an international group to walk through the gun-filled hills to Barcelona.

But that afternoon order began to appear in the restless sensitized town. The clenched fist was seen for the first time everywhere, in the streets and thrust from the armored cars. The Party cars arrived, and all those connected with the Workers' Olympics were taken in open trucks with one armed guard in the truck and one with the driver. Our suit-cases were piled up for fortification; we were told to duck when shot at. The Party man from Barcelona spoke on the necessity for discipline and Party order, instructing the guards not to shoot until it was necessary. There were barricades all along the road—the walls of the farms were piled with bales of hay along the top. People were hiding behind wagons turned over on their sides. They greeted us with clenched fists; so did the traffic cops and the gypsies.

AS we got nearer the city we saw them tearing up paving stones for barricades. There were houses flying white flags. In the city itself there were barricades almost every hundred yards, and the cars were stopped so that people could be indentified. There were machine-gun nests behind many of the barricades. The government service had organized food provision. Everything was shut down except for the apothecary shops, which were ordered ready for emergencies; the hospitals were open.

Coming into Barcelona we saw shooting along the streets. The driver took the long way around the city to the Hotel [illegible]mpiad on the Plaza España, which had been [illegible]quisitioned for people connected with the W[illegible]ers' Olympiad. Mattresses were put down [illegible]he floor for the 2000 athletes. The Hotel [illegible]s converted into a refuge for foreigners. One Frenchman had lost his team at the border. I could never find the man who was managing the publicity for the Olympics because he was always out on the street fighting with the People's Front. We were taken to dinner that night in an automobile spangled with bullet-holes, the upholstery stained with blood; the officials apologized for the condi-

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man to the core. It is the homeland of the Indians too; the majority of the 300,000 still left alive after the white man's pogroms are concentrated on the reservations here. Last week I was present at a sheep-dipping on one of the Navajo reservations. Some 200 Indians had brought in their flocks. Their covered wagons were grouped around the sandy plain, the horses hobbled nearby. Families sat on the ground and ate gobs of mutton. Sheep baaed and gurgled desperately as they were dragged through the troughs. Indian men and women in bright shirts or velvet blouses and buckskin moccasins chattered around the pen, or galloped on horses after their flocks. It was a sunlit, moving scene out of the pastoral Bible. The faces were dark, the language prehistorically strange. Only four pale-faces were present, including myself. This was America, and we were the foreigners here.

Yes, strong impressions assail the Yankee or European foreigner who first comes to the Southwest. Is it any wonder, if he is an uprooted intellectual, sick in the lungs or the brain, of the capitalist civilization he has helped build, that he sinks into this ancient world as though it were Utopia? Poor D. H. Lawrence, that morbid genius who finally became a clinical case for the social pathologist, was the Jesus of the local literary movement that worships the Indian. Mabel Dodge Luhan, lady of wealth and expensive leisure, traveler, dilettante in all the cults, and a book-writer of sorts, has been the St. John of the movement.

The rocky primeval slopes of Taos and Santa Fe are crowded with spectacled artists and writers in sombreros, chaps, and flaming cowboy shirts. Their mentality is expressed in the following poetic extracts:

I lie in bed lazily at Mabel's in Taos.
Breakfast is brought me on a green tray.
The sun shines, the birds sing.
I am not in Taos, I am in Paris!
An Indian maid comes in with toast and coffee.
The sun shines but does not pierce my gloom.
And you, where are you now?
Only death can take my hand and lead me to you.
—From "Memories," by Miss Cassidy.

I asked of life the rainbow gleam
Flung out of the West on yester eves;
For the warble of birds on April wings
And the glisten and rapture of aspen leaves! . . .

. . . To the crystal white peaks I lift my eye,
"Give me toil, give me substance, Oh Life!" I cry.
—From "Sangre de Cristo Mountains,"
by Miss De Huff.

It's not all as bad as that, but the literary crop here has surely been touched by the perpetual drought of the region. Afflicted by provincialism, it seems to have no brain-work behind it, except the notion that mountains are tall, and white poets small. D. H. Lawrence, a sick man, believed the Indians were healthier than he. As a result, he wrote some pretty awful mystic nonsense, most of it a groveling to the facts of physical life. The same bourgeois pessimism that inspired Spengler's theory of the *Decline of the West* and that led that sour German to Hitler and the Nazis, burrowed like an evil worm in the sick mind of D. H. Lawrence. Both gave up the fight for western civilization, and receded to the mythical past; the German to Teutonic barbarism, the Englishman to Indianism.

Director Hearst: "Step on his face, man! You're supposed to be a Red soldier!" *Semyon*

D. H. Lawrence perversely believed that the Indian must be kept uncontaminated by modernism because he was as perfect as man could be. Marks of this surrender to primitivism are streaked like bacon fat through the thinking of the intellectual exiles here. It is the same crowd that once ravaged the night clubs of Harlem, and groveled before the cult of a mythical sensuous Negro, and thus misled a generation of young Negro intellectuals. And, as once in Harlem, on the trail of Lawrence and Mabel Luhan have followed the art shoppes of Santa Fe, the peddlers of souvenir junk, the fake blanket weavers, the Fred Harvey big businessmen, and the real-estate sharks—rents are as high in Santa Fe as in New York! And on the streets, forlorn Indians peddle jewelry and blankets to tourists; mystically, no doubt.

I believe in a regional culture. I believe the Southwest is one of the wonderful regions of earth, a unique area, where three races, the Indian, the Spaniard, and the Anglo-Saxon, struggle to find a new common culture. There are sensible and sincere men among the three races, who have earnestly begun this historic task. Something will come of it all, to contribute a grand chord to the symphony of American life. But I cannot believe that it will be done by blanket peddling, postcard picturesqueness, or shallow Bohemian mysticism.

John Gould Fletcher is a Southwestern regionalist. Recently, in the *New Mexico Quarterly* of Albuquerque, he advanced the novel theory that the machine system had broken down finally, and that the solution for America's economic problems lay in a return to handicraft. It is a familiar viewpoint among the regionalists, their notion of the future of the Southwest being that all the Spanish-Americans and Indians become handicraftsmen on a big scale; no future at all, really, but a return to the past.

The argument was sufficiently answered by other contributors to the *Quarterly*, notably Philip Stevenson and Kyle Crichton. They pointed out that New Mexico could not hope to secede from economic America. The machine, the machine! Surely every thoughtful high-school student knows by now that the machine is a monster only under individual exploitation, but is destined to become the mother of a great democratic culture, with peace and plenty for all, when it has been collectivized. The modern world doesn't vacillate over this problem any more; it was the will-o'-the-wisp of the post-war generation; it still lives, in all its stale and specious importance, only among the Southern "agrarian" group of intellectuals and in the minds of the Southwestern regionalists.

It would be harmless enough, this agrarian machine obsession, if it did not mask something worse. The Southern agrarians, who share it, are really anti-machine because they secretly fear that the machine will eventually emancipate the Negro, through the Marxian formula of machinery-plus-socialism.

When they romanticize over a return to the agrarian past, it is the old feudal slave society they envision. The Negro or the poor white is not consulted. The smell of the slave-market and the fascist theory of racial hierarchies is in all these writings.

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tion of the car, explaining that there had been fighting that day.

That night all teams held meetings to decide whether to stay in Spain or not. All had great majorities in favor of staying. However, the French had orders that they were to go back. We felt that it was right for them to go, that the Popular Front in France and Spain must be preserved at all costs.

The next morning everybody who could was asked to leave the Hotel Olympic and make any arrangements possible in town. I went to look for the American and English teams who had rooms in hotels. On the way over, I stopped at the American consulate, and learned that the consul, Drew Franklin, had been approached by Luis Companys, who told him he could not be responsible for any foreigners' lives. At the consulate, they were willing to give us safe conduct to the border, but safe conduct meant nothing, as they would not supply boats and it would have been suicide to attempt to leave in cars. The three Hollywood people from the train, two newsreel men and an executive, got away, issuing pro-Fascist statements along the road. We got no recognition from the consulate because the team was not backed by an athletic association in this country; neither did we get any recognition as citizens. On the American team were eleven boys, mostly baseball players, all from New York, except for one boxer from Pittsburgh. Henson and Chamberlain were the heads of the team.

The people in Barcelona felt that everything would be all right if other countries would not interfere. Then German and Italian gunboats began to come around. The line-up among the nationalities became clear: the French, Russian, and Spanish on one side, and the English, German and Italian on the other.

The French team left on Wednesday afternoon. One of their athletes had been killed. The two French boats slowly pulled away down the harbor, alive with singing as the thousands on the boats raised clenched fists to sing the "Internationale" along with the hundreds on shore. To a great cry of *"Les Soviets partout!"* the French left.

And all during that night and the days after, the dark, unprotected armies left for Saragossa, the heaviest fascist stronghold; two Hungarians, a Belgian, and at least ten anti-fascist Germans joined that workers' army, and I have heard from them since then: they write to say, outside Saragossa, their morale is strong, and the People's Front they defend is invincible.

On Thursday, the athletes and the groups with them marched halfway through Barcelona in a tremendous demonstration with the people's army, all wearing strips of black for that week's dead. As the army passed, team after team sang the "Internationale": Norwegian, Dutch, English, Belgian, German, Italian, Hungarian, American. Later, knowing that Italian money and guns were behind the Fascists in Spain, and that a machine-gun had sprayed the street in front of the Italian consulate before it was burned, an Italian boy shouted to the people: "The Italian people are with you, watching your victory—and when we get our chance——!" The rest was drowned in a burst of *vivas* and cheering.

But at the second demonstration we were given our responsibility as foreign nationals when Martin, the organizer of the games, said, "You came to see games, and have remained to witness the triumph of our People's Front. Now your task is clear; you will go back to your countries and spread through the world the news of what you have seen in Spain."

IN SETE, where we arrived en route to France, Sunday is fete-day; and the feudal games are held. A red-and-white boat, with its piper and drummer, its team in white on a ladder topped by the jouster, wooden lance and shield ready, advances down the canal, to the old music, to tilt at a blue-and-white boatload.

And, as they meet in the medieval joust, in the rain or sunlight, with the antique music, they raise their clenched fists in a new salute.

Mabel Luhan's Slums

MICHAEL GOLD

SANTA FE, N. M.

ONE night here, alone on a great plain where a coyote howled, I counted ten falling stars in as many minutes. One of the stars left a trail of golden sparks like a skyrocket, then flared white and awful for a moment, and died. Ten worlds had died! And I had been the solitary witness!

different from a subway ride in New ! The stars in this Southwest can albe touched with the hands.

is the geography here that stuns the city or, and fills him with new emotions. The nd burns up under the cruelest sun I have own. It is stretched tight, league after peless league, like the dry, red skin of a erish animal. Scrub cedars and pinyon shes dot this unhealthy skin like scabs. No ter. No shade. At the end of the vast, ernal plains rise the mountains. Rattlekes, cactus, and the evening sun, and the are cracked with heat; one must learn nce and stoicism.

Riding out one day through a canyon, hail down suddenly and almost threw me of the saddle. We galloped to cover r some cedars, and watched the sudden lution in nature. Walking through this same canyon with a gun, popping at the cottontail rabbits, listening to the moaning of rock doves in their cliff-home, trailed by the inquisitive killdeer birds, that wail like old Yiddish mammas, "Oy, yoy, yoy, yoy!" we were suddenly engulfed by the dusk. The canyon became a bloody temple of Indian fear and mystery, scented with sage, its walls dripping with the gore of sacrifice.

The Hopi pueblo at Walpi is perched on a narrow rock-table some 2,000 feet above the plain. A very few tourists, for it was not one of the big dances, were present to watch the religious ceremony of the Hopis. In a narrow space between the apartment-like houses, dark men out of pre-Columbus America chanted and shuffled through a prayer old as the Pyramids. Business men and artists have exploited the Indian dance, but it was real to these people; they sweated under their heavy costumes, and repeated their incantation to the Rain God again and again until it became hypnotic. Jews pray that way in the synagogue, with a desperate and monotonous insistence beyond denial.

And then the sky darkened. I walked out on the narrow stone bridge, and on each side could see the plains for hundreds of miles. A weird yellow army was marching in a solid mass on our high fortress. One saw it widening its flanks, as it prepared to surround us. One saw nature at its work and wars. And it fell on us, the sandstorm, a cyclone of painful grit that whipped eyes and nose, and pressed layers of sand into the scalp.

Millions of years ago, the deserts of Arizona and New Mexico were great mud-flats. In their canals fantastic alligators lived, under the shade of tall pine forests. These trees died of old age, century after century, through the milleniums, and sank into the silt and mud. Mineral waters saturated the trunks until they turned to stone. Then volcanic action of the earth moved them upward through the surface.

Millions of years later, I, a graduate of a New York grammar school, and a columnist of the *Daily Worker*, chipped fragments from these petrified stone trees for souvenirs. Around me pressed the dismal lava hills, bare of vegetation as skeletons, stained white and green with ancient minerals, a scene out of Doré's inferno.

Yes, this great Southwest, physically so much a part of Indian Mexico, shakes a city

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The Southwestern regionalists, behind their romanticization of the Indian and the Spanish-American, must believe similarly that the two races are predestined to perpetual slum life and are by heredity unable to profit by the advantages of modern society. The regionalists ride to the Indian dances in modern automobiles; they live in houses with modern plumbing and electricity. But they seem to think these goods are not for the other races. Yes, for all its fine talk, it is a form of race imperialism and snobbery, this Santa Fe cult.

If it weren't, if the regionalists really cared for the fate of the other races, why is it so difficult to interest most of them in something like the Gallup case? All the industrial work is done here by the Spanish-Americans; they are the proletariat of the region, the basic majority. But they live under a state of fascist exploitation; they cannot organize in trade unions, there is no free speech for them, they live on almost the lowest wage level of the nation. The regionalists are blind to this fascism under their noses.

New Mexico, according to its outraged Health Commissioner in a recent speech, has the highest death rate from disease in the Union. But the regionalists are only interested in "culture." Is a folk culture just a matter of a few books, paintings, and poems produced by a leisured minority? If it were, Wall Street or Newport should be looked to for our American culture. But a great culture, as Walt Whitman said so often, comes only out of a great people, out of free, strong, clean, proud, enlightened masses.

If the Southwestern masses are kept in their present poverty, they will still produce a few Navajo rugs and Spanish tin candle holders. And the artists and writers will still suck some sort of spiritual satisfaction out of it, like slummers, but it will be no more of a regional culture than it is at present.

When I saw my first Indian pueblo at Tesuque, I must confess it seemed familiar to me. It was nothing but the East Side slum I had known in boyhood—or the other steel, mine, or Negro slums I have seen since. Flies, excreta, dirt, and disease sores everywhere—and all the signs of what is politely named malnutrition.

Taos is the wealthiest and most famous pueblo; I had expected much, but it was also a slum; even though it may have been Mabel Luhan's or Mary Austin's favorite slum. This great Southwest is covered with the most evil slums in America.

In Public Health Bulletin No. 223, published by the federal government, one reads the following on the Indian health problem:

> Field surveys reveal an appalling state of poverty, and a disregard for the most elementary principles of personal hygiene and sanitation. The general standard of living is far below anything seen among the under-privileged groups of the general population of the United States.
>
> Extreme poverty is the rule. The causes of this poverty are numerous. Poverty is not always due, as frequently stated, to inherent laziness on the part of the Indian himself.
>
> The social problems of the Indians in the order of their importance are poverty, ignorance, and disease.

Basic to the old Indian culture was the medicine man. On a reservation I heard from nurses and doctors in the Indian Service, how the medicine man operates. Cases that come in to the government clinic are all like the following:

A young Indian girl had suffered from an attack of appendicitis. A medicine man was called, and paid a big fee (something like the equivalent of $15 in corn, leather, other products). He held a two-day "sing" over the girl—magic chanting and witchcraft. Then he administered a drug to the girl, a derivative of belladonna. It paralyzed her kidneys and bladder. Her kidneys stopped functioning for two days. Her brother wanted the government doctor to see her, despite the medicine man's protests. He brought her to the hospital, where she died.

The medicine man's cure for tuberculosis is to kill a horse and make a soup of the intestines, which is fed to the patient. The back of one Indian was a great open sore, running with pus. The bones were exposed until one could almost see the lungs. The patient had had a bad boil, and the medicine man had tried to cure it by burning it with acid.

I saw an old Indian woman who came to have her teeth extracted. She had a dreadful jaw that the medicine man had burned with a hot iron to cure an abscess. A pregnant woman came in, sick with pellagra. Her husband and son, under instructions of the medicine man, had tied a rope around her middle and pulled hard as they could, to squeeze out the evil spirit. It almost killed her. She did not like the hospital food or sweet water, and went home. She died a week later in childbirth. The father did not want the child, and exposed it under a tree to die. The government nurse found it and brought it in.

Ernie

"Oh, doctor! And the Spanish trouble has raised the price of invalid sherry!"

In childbirth, the medicine man sits on the laboring woman and squeezes the uterus as hard as he can, trying to force out the child. One medicine man, in delivering a child, pulled off its arms, and then deserted the woman, saying she had a devil he could not conquer.

Many babies contract blindness, because of the medicine man; I have seen some of his victims. Trachoma, tuberculosis, and dysentery are widespread to a terrific degree, caused by a deficiency poverty diet. The medicine man prays over it.

The government sinks wells all over the reservations. But the Indians, in many cases, throw rocks and mud into these sweet, pure wells, and refuse to use them. Why? Their own water comes from filthy water-holes, covered with green scum and crawling with organisms, like the one I saw at Walpi. But these old water-holes are "sacred," and the medicine man has an economic stake in keeping them. So he frightens them into opposing the government wells.

The regionalists never see or mention some of these things in their literature. Evidently they, too, believe in the medicine men. Is their crime not worse than that of the Indian, poverty-stricken and illiterate as he is, ridden by tribal superstitions, and dominated by inner political cliques that have a stake in the old Indian superstitions?

There is no easy solution for the Indian problem, and I am not offering one. But I believe, whatever the details, that the only hope for survival of the Indian is to get him into the mainstream of modern life, of science, and democratic struggle. Some Indians know this. The Indian once developed a culture as majestic as that of Egypt. He is not merely a picturesque savage, intended by nature to titillate white tourists. He is as capable of all the modern sciences and arts as his blood brothers in old Mexico, or in the Soviet East. Indians are statesmen, doctors, engineers, machinists, novelists, even presidents, in Mexico. The Mongol and Tartar tribes of the Soviet Union, starting from the same historic level as the American Indian, have established their own modern machine industries, and universities, theaters, libraries, music, art, and literature. Russia still preserves the old handicrafts too, as in Mexico. And why not? The old culture can be blended with the new. What is good can be preserved. But if what is bad means poverty, ignorance, and disease, it must go. The primitive race or backward nation can never be anything but the tool and slave of imperialists unless it learns to modernize itself. Science and the machine are its only defense against exploitation. Regionalism is not enough.

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Hearst and Anti-Semitism

JAMES WALSH

The indictment of twenty-two Black Legion officers on the charge of terrorism has uncovered a plot by Virgil F. Effinger, national commander, for a coup d'état. The date for the proposed seizure of power was September 16.

James True set the date for his pogrom against American Jews for the middle of September. The coincidence of date between True's pogrom and the Black Legion coup d'état raises the question of the possible connection between these two terroristic organizations.

The following first-hand report of the anti-Semitic conferences held a little over a week ago in Asheville, N. C., proves that the men exposed by John L. Spivak in his NEW MASSES *series, "Plotting America's Pogroms," are still actively inciting race hatred and violence. The* NEW MASSES *urged prosecution of these pogrom plotters two years ago. Failure to jail the Jungs and Edmundsons, the Trues and Sullivans and Ahearns has allowed these men to become bolder, has encouraged the organization of such bands as the Black Legion.*

The pogrom plotters must be prosecuted. Delay menaces the remaining democracy in America.

Readers are urged to join the NEW MASSES *in demanding that the Department of Justice and the Black and LaFollette senatorial investigating committees take definite and immediate action against these leading anti-Semites. Their incitements to race violence must stop at once.*—THE EDITORS.

ASHEVILLE, N. C.

THE Kingmakers did not come to Asheville. The anti-Semites and the Red-baiting fanatics, the professional inciters to murder, the bigots, and hysterical leaders of sects whose main purpose it is to wipe out liberty, equality, tolerance of race and religion, poured into this little town from all over the country. But the two leaders stayed away. They pulled the strings during the four days of violent speeches against Reds and Jews.

James True ("We're preparing for September") remained in Washington. The man who promised pogroms against American Jews sent his two aides, Michael Ahearn and Edward F. Sullivan. They carried out True's orders.

The other leader was in Rome. He would be the last person in the world to admit connection with the Asheville conference. He has always been "a friend of the Jewish people." But he was a power in Asheville; he moved the pawns. Once he aspired to be president of the United States. Now he sees himself as a maker of presidents. He had his man in Asheville, Major A. Cloyd Gill. William Randolph Hearst always has a large say when there is a chance to build fascism.

True and Hearst dominated Asheville. But even at a camp meeting of anti-Semites and Red-baiters, the factions couldn't work together. The anti-Semites and the patrioteers fell out. Perhaps the exposés published in the last two issues of the NEW MASSES helped split the conference. Certainly the advance notice helped to make the Hearst group more wary. They decided to cover up the anti-Semitism.

Events leading up to the Asheville conference are significant. Last May, Reverend Ralph E. Nollner of Houston, Texas, formerly a member of Pelley's Silver Shirts, a man who used his position as clergyman to promote profitable movements, sent letters to ministers and laymen calling on them to support a National Conference of Christian Ministers and Laymen to be held in Asheville. The conference, so the announcement read, would discuss "Christian Americanism versus Atheistic Communism." Two weeks after the letter, Nollner followed up with an official call to the conference, accompanied by a pamphlet issued by the League of Ten Million (same address as Nollner) called "Facts about Communism." The "facts" contained a recommendation of literature written and disseminated by Robert Edward Edmundson, notorious anti-Semite who was later indicted in New York for his pornographic, anti-Semitic libels. Nollner's slogan for the conference suggested Edmundson's war-cry: "Place only Nordics on Guard."

In June, Nollner enlarged his paper, changing it into a red-white-and-blue magazine with the name *Christian American.* It contained a full list of signers of the call to the Asheville conference. The endorsers were for the most part the most vocal and active anti-Semites in America, including James True, the man who called for a pogrom in September (as reported in the NEW MASSES of August 18) and who patented the special weapon which he affectionately nicknamed "The Kike Killer;" his lieutenants Michael Ahearn, former Boston newspaperman, and Edward F. Sullivan, founder of the anti-Semitic Consolidated Press Service; Harry Jung, Nazi agent from Chicago and head of the American Vigilant Intelligence Federation; Walter S. Steele, publisher of the *National Republic;* Col. E. N. Sanctuary, World Alliance against Jewish Aggressiveness; Royal Scott Gulden, financier of anti-Semitic organizations; and many other "leaders" of anti-Semitic groups.

But there was another faction willing enough to utilize anti-Semitism for political purposes but who felt that the appeal should be more "subtle." Such men as Prof. E. W. Kemmerer, Republican "Brain Truster," Rear Admiral Richmond P. Hobson, the hero of Hearst's Spanish-American War, the backers of the Republican American Coalition of Patriotic Societies. This group was afraid that it was politically inopportune to go the whole way with the open anti-Semites. Reverend Nollner, in a predicament, rushed to New York and closeted himself with Major A. Cloyd Gill. Now Major Gill is Hearst's most outstanding Red-baiter. Major Gill has recently had some unpleasant publicity in relation to his activities on the Americanization Committee of the New York American Legion. Major Gill has been accused as a racketeer and liar by the New York *Post.* Major Gill is one of the strong men behind the Republican American Coalition. Many people feel that the president of the Coalition, John B. Trevor, is only a front for Gill. The major, everyone admits, is only a front for Hearst. It is therefore significant that Reverend Nollner scurried to Hearst's man Gill when the plans for the Asheville conference needed direction.

Major Gill pondered. Finally he hit upon a solution. What the conference must do is not rid itself of the anti-Semites—they were valuable and a moving force behind the conference—but provide itself with a front so that publicly the conference could boast religious tolerance. What could be better than to get some rabbi to appear at Asheville, talk to the conference, and serve as a "front." Nollner agreed. So the astute major trotted up to Mount Nebo Temple and called on Rabbi Abraham Feinberg. Rabbi Feinberg, who considered himself a "liberal," felt that Communism was a little too "liberal." Rabbi Feinberg, evidently not stopping to inquire who the other backers of the conference might be, agreed to be present at Asheville and to speak. Hearst, through Major Gill, had taken the stigma of anti-Semitism from the conference by exhibiting a Rabbi.

But Nollner and Gill couldn't persuade the other "patriots" to go along in this deception. The anti-Semites refused to tolerate a representative of the Jews—even in the cause of Hearstian patriotism. Nollner and Gill found that their most strident supporters were about to back out. But the Hearst clique was determined to cover up. Everyone participating in the conference would be violently anti-Roosevelt. The decided odor of anti-Semitism that surrounded the Republican election campaign made it politically expedient to hide the real mean-

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ing of the Asheville conference as much as possible, even if this meant the loss of the more outspoken anti-Semites. After all, Gill and Nollner could count on the anti-Semites continuing their fight against Roosevelt. It was not necessary to have them linked to the Asheville conference to be certain of their support in the great crusade of defeating the New Deal.

Three weeks before the official opening of the conference, Nollner arrived in Asheville. He addressed the chambers of commerce, the American Legion posts, the Kiwanis clubs, not only in North Carolina but in adjoining states. His tactics had changed. Gone was the anti-Semitic talk. Nollner was all for the non-sectarian aspect of the conference. He had Rabbi Feinberg as Exhibit A and he had also placed the local rabbi, W. C. Wrubel, on the arrangements committee. To lend verisimilitude to the new line, Nollner asked protection of the conference against what he called the "White Nazis." He told reporters that what he actually feared most was a Pelley spy at the conference.

The conference opened August 12. On the Sunday before, Major Gill had arrived to "cover" the conference for Hearst's Universal News Service. The meeting opened in an atmosphere of loving kindness. The anti-Semitic "League of Ten Million" which Nollner had originally set up had been dubbed the "American Forward Movement," with the ostensible purpose of advocating "Americanism, Religion, and Righteousness." The program of the conference was to center around discussions of religious, academic, industrial, and government freedom. The original name of National Conference of Christian Clergymen and Laymen had been cleansed of the word "Christian." The conference was to be what Major Gill had worked so hard to attain, a respectable Hearstian Red-baiting, property-sanctifying, Constitution-hallowing session with Rabbi Feinberg present to prove that anti-Semitism just wasn't in the air. But not one Jew had signed the call.

The split came quickly enough. Major Gill and Nollner were willing to allow True, Winrod, Edmundson, Jung, Ahearn, and the rest of the Jew-baiters to go along with the conference so long as they did not interfere with the way it was run. But the anti-Semites refused to compromise, even the small compromise demanded by Hearst and his spokesmen. Four days previous (August 8), James True had called a hurried meeting in Washington to discuss tactics. Charles Vaughn, formerly a member of Pelley's Silver Shirts, C. G. Campbell and Dr. W. S. Bryant of New York City, Rev. Gerald Winrod, and True's two assistants, Ahearn and Sullivan, put their heads together and drew up a plan of action. They would split the Nollner-Gill meeting and form a new conference which would adhere to Nollner's original principles.

Consequently, when Nollner and Gill opened their meeting in Asheville, the delegates and guests were met at the door of the high-school auditorium by Ernest F. Elmhurst, editor of the *Storm,* (a paper published by a Nazi-supported racketeer named Healy) and by Robert Athy, ex-Guldenite. These worthies handed out announcements of the new conference to open the following evening at the First Christ Church. The delegates and guests to the Nollner-Gill conference (admission through complimentary ticket only) found themselves buttonholed by walking delegates from the secessionists who explained eagerly that Nollner had sold out to the Jews, that the big New York "Communist," Rabbi Feinberg, was going to speak, and that it was the duty of every true American to attend the rump conference where the real story of the Jewish-Communist plot to "crucify the Gentiles" would be aired. The delegates also were informed of the activities of "that dirty Jew Blum" in France, of the "dirty Jews" in Spain, in Russia, and in the Roosevelt (pronounced Rosenfeld) cabinet. If one lingered, the word "Jew" soon became "Kike," and after a short lapse, "Kike" became "bastard" (except when a minister was addressed).

Nollner and Gill, for all their recent and sudden antipathy to Jew-baiting, made no attempt to stop Elmhurst and Athy. Nor did they object to the tableful of anti-Semitic literature which stood at the entrance to the conference auditorium, where copies of the *Storm,* Pelley's *American Gentile,* Edmundson's pamphlets, and the *White Knight,* organ of the terroristic Knights of the White Camellia fostered by James True, were sold.

"Well, Sheriff, think we can go back now? That lynching must be about over."

Serrano

The conference directed by Nollner and Hearst's star reporter, Major Gill, was attended by approximately forty delegates. Nollner tried to pretend that he did not know of the existence of the rump conference. When I asked him about it, he flushed and mumbled, "What conference?" His confusion pleased the James True group immensely. Ahearn expressed their pleasure to Elmhurst at the close of the first rump session:

"We've got the bastards going," he exulted. "I've got a trunkload of *Protocols* and *Toward Armageddon* in my room. Maybe we'd better hold them up a bit. We'll go slow at first, eh?"

The conference met in the auditorium of the Lee H. Edwards High School about a mile from the city. The Asheville Chamber of Commerce loaned the auditorium and evidently arranged for the state police who guarded the entrance—against "White Nazis." The 2500 delegates that Nollner optimistically anticipated turned out to be 200 for the opening and for the majority of the meetings, did not exceed forty people. The conference was dull, repetitious, and routine. A surprising number of patriots found it the ideal place in town to come for a quiet sleep. Four Negroes attended one session to learn the truth about Communism and heard savage anti-Negro speeches. They did not return.

Major Gill saw to it that each delegate received a reprint of a Hearst editorial denouncing the Reds. The speeches all sounded like editorials. Reverend W. R. White, First Baptist Church, Oklahoma City, announced that:

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The masculization of women and the feminizing of manhood by questionable indulgences constitutes a great threat to true Americanism.

Dr. Edward B. Jenkins, Baptist of Rutherfordton, N. C., told of "What I Saw in Russia" and he saw just those things that the Hearst press pays its "investigators" so well to see: nude bathing, starving children, millions lying dead in the streets. Arden S. Turner of Columbus, O., leader of the Student Americaneers, another Red-baiting group, accused John L. Lewis, the C.I.O. and Lewis Gorin of the Veterans of Future Wars, of "boring from within." He expanded on the convention of the American Student Union where Mr. Turner found "moronic looking girls and undernourished boys, physical misfits who could not pass an army test whether they had taken the Oxford pledge or not." Dr. Rembert G. Smith, Methodist, of Pryor, Okla., attacked all other Methodists who had identified themselves with liberal groups. "Consumers' cooperatives are a Mongolian plot to replace constitutional American capitalism with Oriental communism. . . . Wesley was a capitalist—why he made $300,000. . . . Jesus of Nazareth was a capitalist. So far as the record goes, he owned his own tools."

They came and went, and the delegates dozed. Rabbi Feinberg rose and talked about "Americanism," apologized for every Jew who might have been misled into Communism, and acted his part, perhaps unwittingly, as cover-up man for Hearst. When questioned by the NEW MASSES, Rabbi Feinberg said he realized he had "put himself in a false light." He promised an "explanation." The NEW MASSES will print his explanation if it is forthcoming.

But the high mark of the conference was a speech by Rear Admiral Hobson:

> **A thoughtful citizen can see throughout the land a standardized, highly financed, insidious, sustained propaganda against the constitution and the "nine old men," and can detect a half-concealed plan to undermine the authority of the Supreme Court and the integrity of the Constitution by destructive amendments and the appointment of radical judges to fill vacancies. . . . The strategy board of the Public Welfare Association, Inc., from its studies has concluded that the most important and urgent thing to be done is to rally all our people around the Constitution and to segregate the enemies of the Constitution from the rest of the people. To do this and to restore unity of thought and coöperation of plans in a united front, the Public Welfare Association has established a permanent public welfare clearing house publication with two main divisions —a division of Americanism clearing house under the strategy board, and a national defense clearing house of the Military-Naval club of New York.**

The admiral called for added military cooperation with the Public Welfare Association. Veiled in his speech were threats of concentration camps, the hint at anti-Semitism in the reference to Justices Cardozo and Brandeis, and the advocacy of military dictatorship. He asked for the stamping out of Communism as dope peddlers (he said) were stamped out.

Thompson

That was the essence of the Nollner-Gill conference. Red-baiting *ad nauseam,* with a decided undercurrent of anti-Semitism, with the usual raving indictment of all liberalism, with the proposal to do away with civil liberties, with the use of anti-Negro, pro-"Aryan" propaganda. The usual Hearstian incitement to vigilanteism and lynching, the fight to bring fascism to America. This was the "subtle" group at Asheville, the group that obtained two rabbis to act as a front. This group was not yet ready to be openly anti-Semitic. The less "subtle" group held its meetings on the other side of town.

The rump conference held only a few sessions. They attacked in the Asheville press Nollner's "sell out" to the Jews. Their absurd statements did a great deal to clear Nollner of the anti-Semitic label. Nollner and Gill and Hearst could not have ordered a better campaign to clear them of their former anti-Semitic bias. It could not have been arranged by Hearst himself with more effectiveness.

The meetings at the First Christ Church were fairly well attended. After all, Asheville is the birthplace of Pelley's Silver Shirts and Pelley has by no means lost influence. The sessions were "peppier" than those going on at the auditorium: as a consequence, they drew a larger crowd.

James True's spirit hovered over the conference even though he was not present, just as William Randolph Hearst's spirit presided at the Nollner-Gill meetings. True's two men, Ahearn and Sullivan, controlled every move. The ostensible leaders, Charles Vaughn, Gerald B. Winrod, and J. E. Conner, former American consul at St. Petersburg, did nothing without sanction from True's lieutenants. Prepared for the split in advance, the rump conference went along its Jew-baiting way with no hitch in the virulence of the speeches.

Again the speeches were all cut from the same cloth. The Jews were out to ravish American womanhood. The Jews dominated the Roosevelt administration. The Jews were responsible for all ills, for war and pestilence, for droughts and floods, for Communism and atheism, bad weather and the stock market crash, high tariffs and low tariffs. Speaker after speaker vied to outdo the last.

The solution? Well, something must be done. Deport the Jews. Segregate them. Drive them out of government and business. Or as Ahearn remarked to me (using almost the same words as James True had used to Michael Hale, NEW MASSES correspondent, as reported in last week's issue):

"The kike bastards are all alike to me. I won't be satisfied until all of 'em are six feet underground."

The outcome of the rump conference was a call for another conference to be held in Washington, D. C., on October 15. This time, the conference would be called for the anti-Semites present in Asheville, to which were appended the names of other leading anti-Semites in America—without permission, on the theory that no Jew-baiter would refuse to endorse such a conference.

On the surface, the Asheville conferences sound fantistic. But they are dangerous, indicative of a drive toward fascism. William Randolph Hearst does not step into movements unless there is a possibility of achieving what is nearest to his heart—to establish a fascist dictatorship in America. He dare not publicly associate himself with the anti-Semites. Hence, the move to "cleanse" the Nollner conference of the more vociferous of the Jew-baiters. But both conferences had the same purpose. Both conferences discussed ways and means of instituting fascism, of fighting democracy, of finding the necessary scapegoat. In one sense, the True rump conference, because it was so viciously outspoken, is not so dangerous as the more "subtle" Nollner-Gill conference.

It was worth $10,000 to some person or organization to have Nollner organize the conference. One can speculate as to where the money came from. There was a large group in Asheville who were sure it came from Gill. Another group felt that Henry B. Joy of Detroit supplied it, just as he contributed to the Liberty League and paid for copies of Mrs. Dilling's *Red Network* to be distributed free to the delegates to the Asheville conference. But the important fact that came out of Asheville is that Hearst has now put his finger into the organization of hysterical patriots for the bringing of fascism to America and that Hearst seems ready and willing to utilize, whether openly or not matters little, anti-Semitism.

The Asheville split prevented the anti-Semites from gaining the upper hand at this moment in the fascist-Republican-Hearst campaign. They will continue to struggle for dominance. They will launch an intense, nationwide, integrated campaign with plenty of financial backing. They can be defeated only by the broad, unified fight of all working-class, liberal, progressive forces against their propaganda of race hatred.

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Teachers Unite Against Reaction

MALCOLM WINTER

TO THE teachers of America, the American Federation of Teachers has sent forth one appeal from its Twentieth Annual Convention—a stirring appeal for unity against political and economic reaction. The unity sought is no sectarian unity. The Convention acted to cement the ranks of teachers. It set machinery in motion to prevent the threatened split in the A. F. of L. It took steps to promote that broader unity against war and fascism which is the unity of the People's Front of France and Spain.

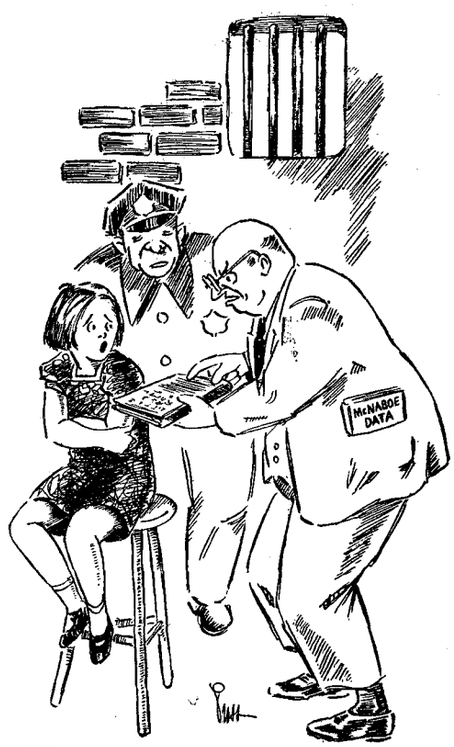
To keep the A. F. of L. united was the Convention's gravest concern. The progressive caucus meetings discussed the problem. An evening session was devoted to it. The resolution that passed without a dissenting voice condemned the suspension threat and called upon the Executive Council of the A. F. of L. to rescind it. It urged that the delegates of the C. I. O. unions be seated at the Tampa Convention and that the charges against these unions be aired there. More important yet, the resolution called upon teachers and workers to fight the split by spurring their Central Labor Unions and State Federations to protest the Council's suspension threat.

One sector of the progressives believed that the resolution did not go far enough. Followers of Tucker P. Smith of Katonah and of Ben Davidson of New York argued that a split was inevitable and that nothing could prevent the expulsion of the C. I. O. unions. While supporting the resolution, they felt that the A. F. of T.'s Council should be empowered to act immediately after the Tampa convention—presumably to draw the A. F. of T. out of the A. F. of L. This view found few adherents. The teachers did not want to cede to their Council the final power to decide the A. F. of T.'s course after the Tampa Convention. Furthermore, it was generally felt that the inevitability of the split depended in large measure on what was done up to the Tampa Convention.

TOWARD developing a broad front against war and fascism, the Convention made a number of unprecedented moves. After long and heated debate, it voted cooperation with the American League Against War and Fascism. This move was opposed, on the one hand, by Miss Selma Borchardt of Washington who sought unsuccessfully to substitute opposition to "all wars" for opposition to "imperialistic wars." On the other hand, Dr. Maynard Krueger of Chicago fought coöperation, arguing that the trade-union base of the League was too small. The convention frankly acknowledged the fact that the League, as constituted, offered organized labor the opportunity for unity with sections of the middle class that had been duped in European countries into supporting Fascism.

The convention took two other steps to combat war and fascism. It reaffirmed its support of a farmer-labor party, and significantly enough, urged Federation locals to cooperate with *all* local movements advancing the formation of an independent farmer-labor party. In the second place, it passed a vigorous resolution boycotting all communication agencies owned by William Randolph Hearst. To make the boycott effective it voted to set up a central anti-Hearst committee, and recommended to each local the establishment of anti-Hearst committees for the purpose of cooperating with the Newspaper Guild and all anti-Hearst organizations and of building up sentiment "to repudiate all candidates whose principles and program are those of Hearst."

SEEKING to unify the teaching profession, the convention made short work of the A. F. of L. Council's recommendation that the charter of the Teachers Union of New York (Local Five) be revoked. On recommendation of its own Council, the convention voted 266 to 107 to reject William Green's proposition. This vote does not accurately reflect the tremendous sentiment for unity among the delegates. The minority that voted against the resolution and introduced its own, differed with the majority not on the idea of rejecting Green's proposal, but on how the rejection should be couched. Thus William Green's attack on the largest and most progressive local in the A. F. of T. was effectively squashed—and with it, his obvious attempt to stem the progressive tide within the A. F. of T.



"What about this 'Little *Red* Riding Hood'?"

A more basic step toward unification was taken with the adoption of new organizational plans. Two paid organizers were replaced by twelve regional vice-presidents charged with the task of spurring organization of the unorganized in their areas. Two additional vice-presidents were established to give representation to the many W.P.A. and college teachers that have come into the organization within the last year. A fifteenth vice-presidency went for the first time in the history of the A. F. of T. to a Negro teacher. All these actions indicate that the Federation is seriously setting out to become the major *industrial* organization of the teaching profession in America.

ACADEMIC freedom was a major concern of the Convention. It went on record condemning the McNaboe investigation. It voted support of the American Student Union's campaign to reinstate Robert Burke, a student suspended from Columbia for demonstrating against Columbia participation in the Heidelberg celebration. It called upon the Board of Higher Education to remove Dr. Frederick B. Robinson from the presidency of City College. It manifested unyielding opposition to "loyalty" oaths for teachers. The more detailed problems of organizing and defending teachers, of improving educational methods, and of raising educational standards, some delegates felt, could have received more attention. To many delegates, conservative as well as progressive, this was the necessary result of the great crisis facing the labor movement and the American people.

Against the 1935 convention, this year's convention makes a sharp contrast, not only in the drive for unity which has come out of it, but in the spirit of unity which marked the proceedings. There was a small conservative bloc, a very large progressive bloc, and divisions within each of these. The conservatives revealed tendencies toward craft unionism—they were somewhat dissatisfied with the presence of W.P.A. teachers. Some of them, led by Selma Borchardt of Washington, D. C., made a last-minute attempt to isolate the A. F. of T.—they introduced a motion, which was quickly tabled, forbidding the A. F. of T.'s Council to coöperate with other organizations. But progressives and conservatives alike were staunchly united on one thing: steadfast opposition to what Hearst, the Liberty League, and Landon represented. It was a conservative who called upon the convention to raise $5,000 for the heroic Spanish workers fighting fascism.

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The Equilibrists and Mr. Keynes

EDWARD MOUNT

THAT bourgeois economics is breaking its back on the problem of the crisis and unemployment is clear to all except the practitioners themselves. The economists' babel in New Deal Washington, rightly a public scandal, is enough to convince most people. The confusing variety of opinions held in the name of science is nicely expressed in a remark attributed to Prime Minister Stanley Baldwin: that when he asked five economists for advice on a problem, he always got six different answers, "two from Mr. Keynes."

It is doubtless true that this confusion of the economists is not important for particular events, since the direct effect of economists on the policies of capitalists and capitalist governments is negligible. The position of bourgeois economists as advisers to capitalists on concrete affairs is about the same as that of fortune tellers; and the successful economist, like the successful fortune teller, is he who says what his patron wants to hear.

But in their role of teachers and publicists the bourgeois economists are extremely important. For a century the young have been entrusted to them for education in political and economic theory. Directly and indirectly they influence and are responsible for a mass of writing in newspapers, journals, and books. They are, and have been, the ideological leaders in fighting communism.

In this last capacity, it is worth noting, there are certain national differences in method. Unlike the German theorists, the English and American bourgeois economists have paid little direct attention to the writings of Marx. Most of them have never read Marx, almost none of them has seriously studied him. For them Marx was "refuted" before they read him. In this atmosphere the student of economics has little incentive to go to Marx; his courses do not facilitate it, and what he learns is a third- or fourth-hand summary opinion in a textbook. Occasionally, as a conspicuous act of liberalism, the *Communist Manifesto* is included in a reading list. As a class, the English and American economists have acted monopolistically and excluded Marxism.

The modern theory of the bourgeois economists is equilibrium theory. It is true that this means for most of them little more than a bit of patter about supply and demand. It is true too that there have been periodic revolts against the sterility of "orthodox" economics, and that "historical," "institutional," and "statistical" schools have been formed, but these latter have formulated little which can be called "theory." The major problem of equilibrium economics is to explain market prices and quantities produced by showing that a large number of subjective and objective factors tend to result in one set of prices and quantities. This is the "equilibrium." Because all factors cannot be included, the equilibrium which is determined theoretically is not to be supposed ever to exist in the real world. It is defined as a description of tendencies, of what would happen to prices and quantities if the factors did not change and if no factor were excluded.

Unfortunately this type of theory cannot deal with unemployment since one of its basic assumptions is that there is always full employment. It is taken for granted that any unemployed workers who want work can always get it by offering to work for slightly less than the going wage, and that in fact competition will always force the wage down until all who want work are working. Faced with the unemployment of the real world, the more reactionary economists blame the trade unions. Those acute enough to note that unemployment occurs where there are no unions have been forced to invent special theories, usually monetary ones, to account for unemployment. The result is that the mind of the ordinary bourgeois economist is divided into two rooms—one holds his equilibrium theory, the other a special cycle or monetary theory.

The inadequacy of traditional equilibrium theory has recently been pointed out by the English bourgeois economist, J. M. Keynes, in his *General Theory of Employment, Interest and Money*.* Keynes was the chief economic adviser to the British delegation at Versailles. He was one of the first economists to realize the fatuity of the reparations clauses of the treaty, and the publication of his *Economic Consequences of the Peace* won him an international reputation as the white hope of liberalism. In subsequent years his advocacy of a managed currency did much to make that doctrine respectable. Keynes sees himself in the role of Cassandra, warning an unheeding Europe against the burden of reparations, an unheeding Britain against the dangers of returning to the gold standard, and an only half-heeding United States of the need for a large-scale public-works program. But he prefers to overlook such lapses as his prediction in 1922 that the U.S.S.R. was on the verge of a catastrophic economic collapse, or his laudatory obituary notice of the Swedish capitalist Ivar Kreuger, who on Keynes's interpretation was a far-sighted benefactor of the human race forced into suicide by the folly of state economic policies, but who was later proved to be a common forger and swindler. It is no secret that Keynes is *persona grata* at the White House, and that he whole-heartedly approves of an expansion of government investment both in this country and in the British Isles.

It is not surprising, therefore, to learn that *The General Theory of Employment, Interest and Money* has proved a best seller in Washington, where the pundits of the government are working overtime at mastering Keynes's proposals for making the capitalist system work. For Keynes believes that he has succeeded in finding the causes of unemployment and the reforms necessary to save capitalism. It is impossible to summarize adequately his long and difficult analysis, but it can perhaps be said that he finds the source of trouble in the desire of the rich to save large parts of their incomes, in the possibility of their holding their savings in liquid, money form (when the alternative is lending at a low rate of interest), and in the reluctance of corporations to push investment in concrete capital so far that the expected yield is less than the rate of interest. He concludes that something must be done to push down interest rates and maintain investment so that employment can be maintained.

This argument can scarcely be criticized except in detail which would be tedious here, but there are signs in Keynes's book of the growing demoralization of bourgeois economics which are worth general attention. The demoralization is evident despite the fact that Keynes assumes the air of a clear-sighted savior bringing the cure to a long-suffering and expectant world.

Wearing their blinkers, the bourgeois economists, along with the capitalist class, have gone through previous crises comparatively unshaken. That this crisis has shaken them the following quotations from the *General Theory of Employment, Interest and Money* will indicate. We now have, for instance, one of the foremost pupils of Alfred Marshall, that pre-*laissez-faire* economist, characterizing his colleagues as "Candidates, who, having left this world for the cultivation of their own gardens, teach that all is for the best in the best of all possible worlds provided we will let well enough alone [p. 33]." And, in contrast, there is this assertion about the present system: "It is certain that the world will not much longer tolerate the unemployment which, apart from brief intervals of excitement, is associated—and, in my opinion, inevitably associated—with present-day capitalistic individualism [p. 381]." Only yesterday this same man thought that a few relatively simple monetary measures were all that was needed to make the system workable. Today this faith is largely gone, and though we are given another cure, it is not a pill but a surgical operation. "In conditions of *laissez-faire* the avoidance of wide fluctuations in employment

* The Macmillan Co., pp. 430 and xii.

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may, therefore, prove impossible without a far-reaching change in the psychology of investment markets such as there is no reason to expect. I conclude that the duty of ordering the current volume of investment cannot safely be left in private hands [p. 320]." As an example, again, of this pessimism we have: "It follows that of two equal communities, having the same technique but different stocks of capital, the community with the smaller stock of capital may be able for the time being to enjoy a higher standard of life than the community with the larger stock; though when the poorer community has caught up with the rich—as, presumably, it eventually will—then both alike will suffer the fate of Midas. This disturbing conclusion depends, of course, on the assumption that the propensity to consume and the rate of investment are not deliberately controlled in the social interest but are mainly left to the influences of *laissez-faire* [p. 219]." Another unflattering view of modern capitalism: "If the Treasury were to fill old bottles with bank-notes, bury them at suitable depths in disused coal-mines which are then filled up to the surface with town rubbish, and leave it to private enterprise on well-tried principles of *laissez-faire* to dig the notes up again (the right to do so being obtained, of course, by tendering for leases of the note-bearing territory), there need be no more unemployment and, with the help of the repercussions, the real income of the community, and its capital wealth also, would probably become a good deal greater than it actually is. It would indeed be more sensible to build houses and the like; but if there are political and practical difficulties in the way of this, the above would be better than nothing [p. 129]."

The above passages and arguments which go with them are significant not simply because they represent bourgeois economics as accepting unemployment as inevitable, but also because responsibility for unemployment is placed on essential elements of the system. Keynes, perhaps the foremost monetary "reformer" of his time, has lost faith in the efficacy of monetary reforms for eliminating unemployment. Nothing less than state control of investment is necessary—of investment, that sacred prerogative of the capitalist. The bourgeois economists began by denying unemployment, then they called it frictional; of recent years they have had to go for its source nearer and nearer the center of their system, and now Keynes finds it in interest, one part of profits.

To a Marxist, there is one technical point associated with this change in outlook which is especially interesting. Take the following passage: "It is much preferable to speak of capital as having a yield over the course of its life in excess of its original cost, than as being *productive*. For the only reason why an asset offers a prospect of yielding during its life services having an aggregate value greater than its initial supply price is because it is *scarce;* and it is kept scarce because of the competition of the rate of interest on money. If capital becomes less scarce, the excessive yield will diminish, without its having become less productive—at least in the physical sense."

> I sympathise, therefore, with pre-classical doctrine that everything is *produced* by *labor,* aided by what used to be called art and is now called technique, by natural resources which are free or cost a rent according to their scarcity or abundance, and by the results of past labor, embodied in assets, which also command a price according to their scarcity or abundance. It is preferable to regard labor, including, of course, the personal services of the entrepreneur and his assistants, as the sole factor of production, operating in a given environment of technique, natural resources, capital equipment and effective demand. This partly explains why we have been able to take the unit of labor as the sole physical unit which we require in our economic system, apart from units of money and of time [pp. 213-214, Keynes's italics].

This passage comes from a bourgeois camp which for seventy-five years has been crying that Marx's labor theory of value has been refuted and is "antiquated." As is well known, after the English bourgeoisie had successfully used the labor theory of value in the early nineteenth-century struggles against the land-owners, and when the proletariat was beginning to turn the theory against the bourgeoisie, the bourgeois economists began to find it unsatisfactory and developed the marginal-utility theory and the present equilibrium theories. But now Keynes, in order to deal with unemployment, is forced to retrace their steps. His labor theory is not a conscious theory of value, but nevertheless in his book increase of output means increase of labor and vice versa. As he shows, on the supply-and-demand theory, increase of output—where diverse things, such as cloth and furniture, are comprised—can be given no definite meaning.

It would be stupid to think that Keynes is becoming a Marxist; he remains an uninformed anti-Marxist and, in fact, states that Gesell, a German who is known as the advocate of stamped money as a substitute for socialism, has more to teach the future than Marx. Keynes believes that capitalism can survive with state control of investment and a policy of reducing the rate of interest to zero. This scheme is fundamentally of the same ideological importance as Douglas's Social Credit and the nonsensical economic theories which the capitalists behind Hitler knew how to utilize in his climb to power. They are the ideas which are used to combat the spread of Communism. It is important to remember that the half-critiques of capitalism always furnish the capitalists with a pool of ideas to use against the masses, if need be. Nevertheless it is important also to recognize that, in the worst crisis of capitalism, the rottenness and inefficiency of the system have made ridiculous the central theories of capitalist economics even in the eyes of their exponents. Of course the reformist ideas of "rationalization," "social control," and "planning" (with capitalism) had appeared before, but despite them the influence of the imposing orthodox theories had remained high, especially in England.

In order to evaluate the changes in bourgeois economics, it is necessary always to keep in mind that their best theorists have so wrapped themselves up in the abstractions of equilibrium theory that in their professional capacity they cannot see the world at all. Consequently the discovery by a bourgeois economist of the most elementary facts about modern economic life becomes almost a mark of genius. An example is the furor caused by the recent discovery by several theorists that monopolies and competing monopolists have supplanted competition (by numerous sellers) and that therefore equilibrium theory must be modified. Another example is the present book by Mr. Keynes. Through his wide financial experiences he has learned that Wall Street speculators are not engaged in acquiring a firm basis of knowledge about the future earnings of business corporations but in guessing what the market quotations will be a short time hence. If anyone but an equilibrium economist were to inform us of this, we would say that he had discovered his nose; but put in the appropriate jargon and called to the attention of the equilibrium blindness, it must be called "breaking ground."

In short, it soon must become clear that equilibrium theory has become more and more precise about less and less; that with its *"n"* commodities, and *"l"* firms, and *"m"* factors of production, and *"o"* consumers, and its 70,000 equations for describing the economic behavior of Sparrow Nest, New Mexico, it can really handle no major economic problem. And as far as Keynes's technical improvements are concerned, it can be predicted that they will be torn to pieces by the equilibrists themselves.

(*To be concluded*)

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Lost Prairie

NATHAN ASCH

I WALKED along the street in Texarkana, Texas, where Louisiana, Arkansas, and Texas almost make a corner and I wondered how I could get to live a week with a sharecropper family. I had crossed Arkansas and come here because I wanted to see the most isolated, the deepest cotton country, untouched by the world and not knowing the outside world. Probably I should have gone to Alabama, but I heard that of late years cotton had been grown each year further westward, until now Texas was the great cotton state. I wanted to see what the South was doing when left alone completely to work out its own problem. I wanted simply to enter a sharecropper's shack and ask if I could stay there for a while.

But where was I to go? How does one look for a sharecropper's shack? Where does one find the impudence to step off the road, and enter a home and demand shelter there? There are highways that leave Texarkana and go off in every direction; which highway to take and where does one stop?

I stood and I watched a young man with blond hair and red face look at his car—it had Minnesota plates—and sadly shake his head. I asked what was wrong.

He said: "The axle's broken."

I offered to help him push it to a garage. He said:

"What's the use? I can't buy another axle."

I said: "You're a long way from home."

He said: "I've just got enough money to buy gasoline home. I better get a bus ticket instead."

"I said: "Let's go and have a glass of beer."

His name was Peder, and he and his brother had a small farm in Northern Minnesota. They couldn't get back what they put into wheat, and it didn't pay them to raise hogs. They had a few cows and a lot of hens; and there was just enough work for one, so they took turns, one staying at home and the other traveling all about the country.

Peder said: "I've been just about everywhere, and I guess I've stopped now."

I asked him how much would a new axle cost, and he told me. I said:

"Have you seen how the sharecroppers live?"

He said: "They live terrible."

"Let's really find out how they live," I said, "what they eat and how they sleep, and what they talk about."

He said: "All right. We're bad enough up in Minnesota, but I'm ashamed to look these people in the face."

We put in a new axle and we got a map, but all we could see were names of towns and of roads. We asked a man at a filling station. He looked at us strangely, but he said:

"It's all cotton around here. You go down by the Red River and you'll see nothing but farms."

We drove east out of town on a United States highway, and then it became just a country road. It was too early for plowing, and in the fields there was nothing but stubble. Along the side of the road there were tumbledown shacks.

Peder asked if I wanted to stop. I said no. Let's go on for a while. Down below us was Red River, but first we came to Garland, Arkansas. It was the meanest town that I have ever seen. No city slum, no suburb, no condemned row of tenements ever had a more wretched appearance. With one exception there wasn't a house that was painted, a house that was whole, that had a whole roof, that was not on the verge of collapse. With but that one exception there was not a house that could be called a house. There was no glass in the windows, no doors that had hinges, no wall without a yawning crack. The exception was the church, which was new, and the minister's house. There must have been a thousand people who lived in Garland, Arkansas, but these white and black creatures wore clothes that could not be said ever to have had color, to have been unpatched, been new, been bought. And this was not in the bleak, hopeless Ozarks; it was in rich cotton country; and about a half mile beyond, down by the toll bridge, there was a newly built filling station, and the attendant and a man in breeches and boots were admiring a new automobile. I asked Peder to stop.

We got out of our car and we strolled toward the two men and we stood admiring the beautiful car. I asked the man in boots if the car was his. He smiled yes.

I asked: "You farm around here?"

He said, yes, he had about four hundred acres.

I asked: "How many tenants have you got?"

He said he didn't know yet. Last year he'd had thirty families; but he said he was considering not having any tenants this year. He was playing around with the idea of having nothing but day labor.

I asked: "Where are the families from last year?"

He said: "Oh, I let them stay on through the winter."

I asked how did he think they had lived on through winter; it didn't seem to me that the heat would stay in with all the holes in the walls.

He said: "Those sons of bitches can live through anything. They've got hides like hogs."

I asked if he didn't think it would increase the value of the land if the improvements on it were weather tight, were in habitable condition?

"No," he said. "Anybody who'd do that would be crazy. He'd be laughed at. Two years ago I had one of those brain storms. I built a new outhouse for each tenant shack. Do you know what those bastards did? The first cold spell, and they knocked down the outhouses and they burnt them for fuel."

"Where can they get fuel?"

"They can buy it. I sell it."

We got back in the car and Peder asked, where now? I suggested we get on a side road. We drove almost down to Red River, and then turned off on a dirt road.

I said: "What do you think of this for an idea: 'The worse you exploit somebody, the worse you hate him.' You have to. Your conscience wouldn't let you alone."

Peder said: "If I was his tenant I'd shoot him."

We saw a sign; "LOST PRAIRIE—1 MILE." We saw a man walking down the road and we gave him a ride. He wore overalls and half of his face was covered by a birthmark. We asked him if he lived in the neighborhood. He said he was a renter. Where did he rent? Well, he didn't rent nowhere right now. The doctor in Texarkana, who owned the land he lived on, had hired day labor. Sometimes he got day work in the fields.

"How much do you get?"

"Anywheres from fifty to sixty cents a day."

"How many hours do you work?"

"From dark to dark."

I'm not writing this in Arkansas dialect, nor in the way they're supposed to speak in Louisiana and in east Texas. This man spoke English and I understood him. He was white, but the Negroes spoke just as he did. And so did the planter with the new automobile. I was not interested in regional dialect; what I wanted to hear was how people lived.

We drove along, then the man said he was home. We asked if we could meet his wife, and he took us inside. The shack had four walls, with newspapers stuck in the cracks, and two beds and a stove and a packing box at which the wife was standing and ironing. Two children were in school; and the eldest boy was out rabbit

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hunting. "Maybe he'll bring us a rabbit." Peder and I sat on a bed and we smoked cigarettes. The wife kept on ironing, then she stopped and straightened her back.

The man said: "Her back gives her misery."

I asked why she didn't go to the doctor that owned the land they lived on.

The man said: "He charges two dollars." Then he lost his temper and shouted at his wife. "Why don't you stop ironing?"

She turned to us: "The children have to look clean or they won't let them in school."

The man muttered: "School!"

The woman said: "If they get an education, it's something nobody can take away from them. I'll keep them in school if I have to die for it."

Peder said: "Why don't you do something about it? Why don't you and your friends get guns and go on the towns?"

The man shook his head: "Well, by God. Something will have to happen pretty soon."

We left. We drove on; that whole country must have been called Lost Prairie, because there was no town on the road.

We came to a shack that was leaning on piles elevated from the ground, and seeming as if it had to collapse the next moment. There were two Negro children lying on the side of the road; a Negro woman and man sat on the threshold. The man held a twig in his hand. We got out of the car and came toward the house; the man smiled pleasantly at us.

We said we were from the North; we had been driving around and were talking to people and asking them questions. Could we ask him some questions?

Again he smiled nicely and said: "Sure enough. You want to know the truth and we'll give you the truth."

For the last six years he had been renting eleven acres from the lawyer in Texarkana. It was the time of the year to discuss the renting, but the lawyer had not come; each year he was late; he wanted to scare them into buying a mule. Each year they refused, and the lawyer threatened to stop renting to them. He wanted $160 for it, but "It can't be a good mule if he's so anxious to sell it."

The woman said: "If we had money, we'd buy a cow with it."

We asked if we could go inside of their home. They nodded Of course.

There were two rooms; the room they slept in and the room where they cooked. An opening in the wall was the entrance; there was no frame to it, no place for a door. Inside of the room there was a mattress on the floor, and that was all. In the inner room there was a stove and an oil lamp and a packing box. That was all in that house. There were no beds, no second mattress for the children, no table, no dresser, no chairs, no mirror, there was no closet; there were no clothes in that house. In the room where they cooked there hung from a nail a side of bacon, they said from a hog they had killed last fall. And the place was a sieve; light could be seen through the four walls and the ceiling.

Peder and I did not look at each other, and we came down from the house and I said:

"I don't see how you people can live."

The Negro said: "We don't live here. We're just here."

I said: "How can he demand $160? Where would you get $160?"

"He'd take it off our share in the fall."

"What is your share in the fall?"

The man didn't know. The reason there was no meal in the house was that until the shares were agreed the storekeeper would not give them credit. Whatever they bought through the summer he put into the book; and in the fall the lawyer settled out of their share. Last fall there was enough left to buy the children a pretty for Christmas.

I thought of my resolution to live with sharecroppers. Where would I sleep? What would we eat? What would we do? How does one live with people that don't live?

We left that house and we drove on to another house; and this one had a real door, and I knocked on it; the door opened, and inside the room was papered with old newspapers. The people living there had a sense of decoration, and the newspapers had been cut into patterns of print and pasted on the walls with frills and with curls. There was a place on the floor where a fire was burning and three Negro women sat around the fire.

They were suspicious of me and remained silent. I tried to explain. In far-away New York City there was a newspaper interested in how they lived. I would write stories about them.

They said they couldn't afford it. I said it would cost them nothing. I would just talk to them and then write about them. They didn't believe me. They didn't believe anybody wrote pieces for nothing. I went back to the car and there was the Negro man talking to Peder. He too was suspicious.

I said: "We're your friends. We can't stand to see how you live. We're going to write about it; we're going to make people so mad, they'll have to do something about it."

I took his hand and I pressed it. He pulled it away.

He said: "I was trained by Southern white folks, and I know my place. Maybe if I had been trained up North, I'd have been different. But I'm here. And I know my place and I keep it."

He went back to the house with the paper inside, and we drove on. We stopped at other houses and we saw the same picture and heard the same story. It was the time for renting; and the planters were trying to get advantageous shares; and they were considering abandoning the share system altogether and hiring day labor to work from dark to dark at fifty to sixty cents for the day. We asked the people what they would do, and we were told: "We don't know what we'll do."

"Recognizing" the Spanish rebels. *Russin*

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Our Readers' Forum

Money for Spain

It seems to me that in the many interesting comments on the Spanish situation too little emphasis has been put upon the need for funds and too little information published as to the committee to which we should send our contributions. The loyalists have apparently been able to obtain enough money for immediate purposes, but with the certainty that foreign fascist intervention will increase in proportion to the success of our comrades, it behooves us to raise now and transmit to them every last cent that we can possibly squeeze out of whatever resources we have.

As everyone knows, the Spanish people had been forced into extreme poverty even before the civil war began, and now these impoverished defenders of our civilization are faced with the problem, not only of feeding and supplying an army in the field as well as caring for the people at home, but also of preparing themselves to resist whatever horrors foreign fascists have in store for them.

I enclose bearer check for ten dollars, with the request that you will forward it to the appropriate committee.

B. B.

[Other readers who wish to contribute to the defense of Spanish democracy are urged to send funds to the United Committee for Struggle Against Spanish Fascism, 21 E. 17th Street, New York City. —THE EDITORS.]

Dairy Farmers in York State

The present unrest among the dairy farmers has been brewing for a long time. The reason for its coming to the forefront at this time is the drought, which has raised hell among New York State dairy armers. The hay and corn crops, which are the asic crops for the dairy farmer, have been destroyed. This means that many farmers will have to do one of two things, either sell off some of their cows or else buy hay to feed their cows through the winter. Good dairy milk cows are not created overnight; rather it is something that requires several years. It is my opinion, therefore, that the great majority of farmers will decide upon buying hay. This action will boost the cost of production of milk for the farmer. The farmer's margin of profit in milk production is already at a dangerously low point; this added burden will create a crisis as far as the farmer is concerned. The farmers' movement now is in reality a demand for drought relief in the form of higher prices. If we had more effective farm leadership in New York State we probably would see action directed against two fronts: first, higher prices for milk, and second, drought relief from the government. Without, of course, any increase to the consumer. I believe I can safely say that all farmers are against an increase in consumers' cost; they consider the present difference in price between what they receive and what the consumer is forced to pay sufficiently large to take care of any increase to them.

The reason why upstate New York is leading in this struggle is because the situation up there is more acute, the price that they receive is much lower.

The New York Milk Control Board which sets the price for milk places milk into four categories, as follows:

Class 1—milk that is bottled and consumed as is, called fluid milk.

Class 2—milk used for production of cream.

Class 3—milk used in production of butter.

Class 4—milk used in production of cheese.

There is a different price for each classification. Class 1 brings the highest price, and the price drops in accordance to the classification.

Very little of the milk from upstate New York is used for Class 1; most of it goes in Class 2, 3, and 4, and with it goes the correspondingly lower price. Bear in mind that there is no difference in the milk of each of the classifications and that, more important, the cost of production for each is the same. For this reason the call for action comes from the northern part of the state. Also for this reason the farmers involved in this potential strike are calling for the abolition of the Milk Control Board. I do not believe this is the correct line because I think that with sufficient pressure the Board could be used as an instrument for the farmer. We should be in favor of abolition of the different classifications.

JACK FREEDMAN.

Consumers and Milk

The following telegram was sent to the New York and New Jersey Milk Institute, meeting this week to discuss the milk price situation:

"Dr. Shirley W. Wynne, President
New York and New Jersey Milk Institute
Hotel Pennsylvania, New York City

"On behalf of conference of fifteen consumer organizations representing thousands of New York families and numerous other organizations which are joining in this effort to protect consumers we protest your efforts to bring about increase in retail price of milk. Price of milk in New York is already higher than prices in other large cities and distributors' margin is among highest of all large milk-producing areas. Any increase in retail price at this time would be serious blow to many millions of residents of this state and would reduce consumption of milk by those who need it most."

CONSUMERS UNION OF UNITED STATES, INC.,
JAMES GILMAN, Vice President.

Folk Movies

Your article, "Folklore and the Cinema," in the August 11 issue of the NEW MASSES is the soundest essay of its kind that I have ever read. In the current number of the *Southwest Review,* I characterize *Green Pastures* as being "the minstrel show at its apex." As one of the few left-wing folklorists in the country, I am especially interested in any effort to use the folklore tradition for the advancement, rather than the regression, of human culture. There is a very grave danger that the fascists will capitalize upon this tradition unless the proletarian writers appropriate it first. . . .

The contrast between the folk cultures under capitalism and under socialism is beginning to interest me increasingly. The *South Today,* a syndicated newspaper column, has asked me to do an appraisal of the southern folklore school. I mean especially to pan those Southern folklorists who have adopted such a patronizing attitude toward the Negro. If you have ever attended a gathering of these professional delineators of the Negro, you have probably found the atmostphere to be sickening. It is rather apparent that the rich Negro folk-culture is simply, in its present hands, an ideological tool of Southern feudalism. HAROLD PREECE.

Farrell Takes Exception

Morris U. Schappes's letter, "Footnoting Hicks," in the NEW MASSES (Aug. 18, 1936), is an object lesson in how not to act in a controversy. First, I wish to point out that he is mistaken in his assertion that my article, "Granville Hicks: Critical Vulgarian" (*American Spectator,* April, 1936) is included in my book, *A Note on Literary Criticism.*

The main body of Mr. Schappes's letter deals with the questions of taste and interpretation. I do not propose to argue either questions of taste or of interpretation with Mr. Schappes.

However, Mr. Schappes charges that I use "the tactics of the literary gutter," and that I am guilty of distortion. He writes: "Farrell attempts to show that Hicks hasn't mentioned every author that Farell thinks should have been included. While making the general observation that Hicks's volume of some 300 pages does not profess to be an exhaustive history but rather an essay one should note that Farrell expects Hicks to write about Henry Roth's *Call It Sleep* even though that novel had not yet appeared when Hicks completed his book; and that Langston Hughes and Randolph Bourne, of whom Farrell could find 'no mention' are very definitely included in Hicks's treatment.

"I could cite many more instances of similar distortion 'in the face and eyes of his readers.' But it is more important to find out why Farrell does this kind of thing."

Henry Roth's *Call It Sleep* appeared in the early part of 1935. The revised edition of Granville Hicks's *The Great Tradition* appeared in the fall of 1935.

In Granville Hicks's *The Great Tradition* there are two references to Randolph Bourne. On page 210, Hicks writes: "But the new forces in American life bore their real fruit in . . . the criticism of James Huneker, Joel Spingarn, H. L. Mencken, Van Wyck Brooks, and Randolph Bourne." On page 252, Hicks writes: "He [Brooks] even deprecated the proposal made by his friend, Randolph Bourne, to ally the intelligentsia and the workers." I submit that this is not a treatment of Randolph Bourne. Perhaps Mr. Schappes thinks that it is.

I have read both editions of Granville Hicks's *The Great Tradition,* and I can remember no treatment or mention of Langston Hughes. I have checked through the book again, and I have referred to the index, and I still find no mention of Langston Hughes. Perhaps Mr. Schappes could refer me to the page numbers of the particular edition of *The Great Tradition* where a treatment of Hughes can be found? Or is Mr. Schappes making the subtle point that silence and omission is treatment?

These are facts which can be checked by reference to indexes and copyright dates. In the light of these facts, perhaps Mr. Schappes will have something more to say concerning his proposal that I be taught how to read, and how to write criticism.

I might also ask what further he has to say concerning the additional citations he can make to prove that I distort.

My references to Hicks's omissions were only the most incidental of my criticisms of him. I questioned why he had not referred to the writings of Langston Hughes, and two other Negro writers, Claude McKay and Jean Toomer. I thought that "the foremost Marxian literary critic in America" would have some comments and some judgments to offer concerning the contributions of Negro writers to contemporary American literature. I also questioned why, when he devoted space to American writers whom I considered inferior (such as Winston Churchill), he omitted any treatment of novelists like O. E. Rolvaag and Mary Austin? If such questionings are the tactics of "the literary gutter," I plead guilty to Mr. Schappes's allegations. If not, I repeat that perhaps he has something more to say. I shall await his explanations with interest. His letters remind me of a comment of Karl Marx's: "The educator must himself be educated."

In closing, I should like to offer a comment on criticism which I made in the last chapter of *A Note on Literary Criticsm.* "The harping cry that criticism must be raised above the level of personalities, the search for personal motives rather than for ideas and criteria of judgment behind critical evaluations—such serve only to advertise a paucity and a degradation of ideas." Critics who have ideas to express do not go around belching constantly that their opponents are personal. JAMES T. FARRELL.

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REVIEW AND COMMENT

Socialism and Solitude

THE special value of the volume under review * is not that it provides new information about large political happenings, but that it is the unsparingly candid and detailed response of a distinguished intellectual who has chosen for his main area of observation the more intangible aspects of daily life in the first land of Socialism. He has sought to write a kind of "inner history," at least as far as that was possible during a three months' stay. Inescapably, and probably not altogether without design, he has traced the voyagings of his own mind.

Wilson's work as a critic and social commentator, since the publication of his *American Jitters,* has had increasing weight and authority. He has been engaged in a quest which sooner or later must become the burden of every contemporary writer who is not content to remain a mere manipulator of empty symbols, but is seriously seeking to establish that living relation with the common life of his country which would give validity and relevance to his work as a writer.

The travel diary in which he records his experiences in the Soviet Union is remarkable for the purpose that is continuously present throughout its apparently wayward impressionism: to ascertain in what relation a cultivated, exceptional individual like himself would stand toward the life of the masses under Socialism. Where some intellectuals have visited the Soviet Union in a mood of complete self-abnegation, while others visited it in a spirit of stubborn refusal to compromise with a single one of its achievements, Wilson prepared himself for an examination of Socialism by taking with him a set of values, extracted from American life and subjected to caustic and ironic observation, which he was determined to test against the experience of what he calls "collective living." That Wilson in this respect raised an issue of importance is confirmed by the international propaganda of reaction which seeks to alarm people with warnings against the menace which Socialism is alleged to represent to their "individuality."

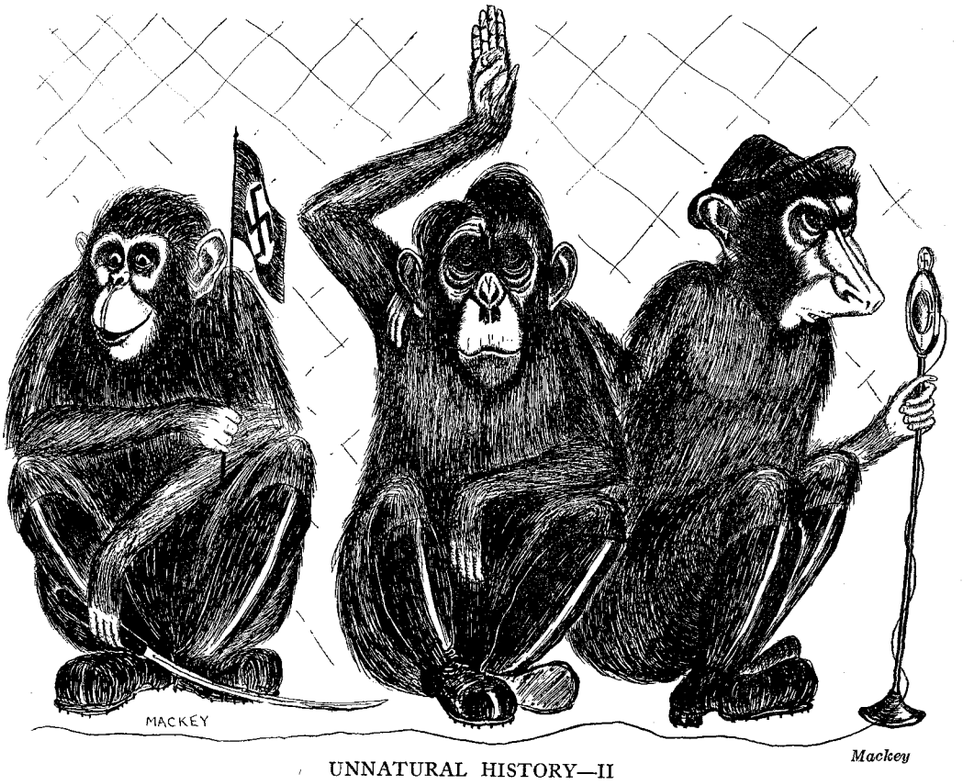
The resulting volume has rather shocked some people, especially those who mistakenly tried to judge it from a reading of excerpts published in magazines.

Apparently, it was inevitable that Wilson's authority as a kind of political-social critic should cause some readers to seize upon his political conclusions to the exclusion of almost everything else in the book. This is regrettable since these political sections are the most dubious things in it.

There are, obviously, some pages in Wilson's volume which call for stringent polemical reply, which provoked some critics to hostile scorn. Whatever the emotional source of this critical method, it seems possible to evaluate Wilson's latest book, and his work in general, in a manner at once more analytical and appreciative, without yielding anything to his confusions and prejudices on fundamentals. It must be obvious that there is a wide margin, especially on questions not having immediate political consequences (for example, in matters of literary taste, music, personal habits, and so forth) where decided differences can and must exist within limits of unquestioned devotion to the Soviet Union, its leaders, and the cause of the working class. It is not necessary to labor the point about ruthless and utterly irreverent self-criticism, for which the Communists are so famous. It is, at the same time, equally unnecessary to labor the point that self-critical evaluation is possible only from the vantage point of a coherently thought out, firmly held position.

Wilson notes that "when a traveler discovers that his baggage does not turn up right away in his room, he decides the Soviet system is a failure; if he runs into an amiable official who arranges to have something done for him immediately, he becomes confident that the Russian peasants are the happiest in the world." The remark is shrewd, for it implies the need of an unambiguous point of view from which to make judgments, regardless of personal accidents. It is the lack of this, and the persistence of an ambiguity deep-rooted within him, that are the key to the startling and contradictory dualities which Wilson brought back with him and which finally permitted his obsessions to obscure the freshness and artistry of his travel diary.

He found the crowds in Leningrad "not straining, not anxious like our people, not pitted against an alien environment, but as if the whole city belonged to them, as if they could make use of all its facilities, and feel at ease in any part of it." After a visit to the opera, where, he writes, "I can't remember ever witnessing anywhere else curtain calls so prolonged and enthusiastic," he looks up and sees the statue of Lenin, "the right arm and hand outstretched, and in the eyes a look both piercing and genial, at once as



Mackey

UNNATURAL HISTORY—II

Three examples of the Chimpanazi (*Socialismus invertus*). These apes are readily tamed and can do various tricks. Found chiefly in Germany but various types have been found in U. S. Very destructive and vicious when at large. Love to burn books and mutilate human beings. Fortunately the above specimens are almost extinct. The one on the left (*Goeringus inflatus*) has been taught to fly and wield an ax. The center simian (*Hitlerus horribilis*) has been named king of the jungle as he can make noises longer and louder than all the other beasts. The other (*Goebbels rodentus*) is of the mandrill or baboon type and as dangerous as either of the others. This creature is believed to have borrowed many of the traits of the hyena, especially that of being moved to laughter by decay and death.—JOHN MACKEY.

* *TRAVELS IN TWO DEMOCRACIES, by Edmund Wilson. Harcourt, Brace & Co. $2.50.*

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if he were giving back to labor what it had made and inviting it to share for the first time in its heritage of human culture, and as if he were opening out to humanity as a whole a future of which they were to recognize themselves the masters, with the power to create without fear whatever they had minds to imagine." He found the Red Army "the only democratic army in Europe . . . unlike any which has ever been seen in our time. Instead of being the least intelligent, they are among the most intelligent members of the community." He went to parties where he spends "the jolliest evenings of my life," and meets "the superior groups of the Soviet Union who are among the most attractive people in the world, and seem to be among the happiest."

He found "there is a kind of freedom here that one does not feel in other countries. Here nobody is socially self-conscious; nobody is disagreeable or rude." Further, "it is, I suppose, easier for people of all kinds to get together and enjoy themselves and communicate with one another here than anywhere else in the world."

He pays tribute to the utter devotion of the Communists, as well as their efficiency. Somewhat exaggeratedly, perhaps, he writes, "if you really wanted to get something done, you had to go to a Communist about it." He gives a picture, in an oblique sort of way which only adds to the effect, of the Communist head nurse in the hospital where he was laid up for a while, who worked her head off twenty-four hours a day with inexhaustible kindliness and humor and who remarked that "formerly she had done more active work, but that her heart was bad and they had put her here where the work was not so exhausting." Then there was the old doctor who couldn't sleep all night, worrying whether Wilson had a blanket. "That evening I felt very sharply that the existence of the Soviet Union, with all its old slowness and debris, such as I was pretty well submerged in, in that old hospital, was the only guarantee in Europe against another receding tide of civilization. Like the old lady from Springfield, Illinois, I felt that it was safer here."

But in the midst of these the reader is suddenly struck between the eyes with nonsense. "And with all this, in spite of their efforts to rationalize and humanize their punishments, they still carry over from the Czarist regime a good share of plain medieval cruelty. . . ." And as evidence for this, he cites the fact that while the shrine of the Virgin has gone the way of all relics, the Russians have not yet removed the old head-chopping bowl from Red Square. And again: "The Moscow 'tic': I hadn't believed it when I had been told that people always looked over their shoulders before venturing to say anything about politics. But they do, and I find that I do it too."

But it is his comments on Stalin that are most hideously wrong. His obsession on this point (it cannot be called anything else) leads him unerringly to people who will confirm it. He finds "a highly placed Communist" who makes a crack about the impossibility of Voroshilov succeeding Stalin in case anything happened to him. "Voroshilov?" replied the Communist. "Oh no: Voroshilov is a Bolshevik." Presumably, the "highly-placed Communist" and the author are of the opinion that Stalin is not a Bolshevik. He uncovered some kind of rare bird whose wife "dreamt that Stalin and Kaganovich came upstairs here and came to our apartment. I was terribly frightened." But it was a good dream after all. ". . . Stalin patted me on the shoulder like this, and smiled." He finds a school-teacher who sighs to him in French, "Before the Revolution the Russians were very sad. Now they are sad."

He discovers what no one else discovered before, that "nobody was allowed to sit down while Stalin was standing up" during one of the parades. He finds some kind of nincompoop, "P., a young American living in Moscow . . . who calls for 'necktie parties' for all his opponents, and who is dubbed, on account of his callow moodiness (because 'he never had a girl') 'a regular Trotskyite.'" "Nobody," comments Wilson, "approves more heartily of the more ruthless policies of the government than he." That it is possible to pick up people like this in the Soviet Union there can be no doubt. But that Wilson, apparently, had no touchstone of judgment by which he could evaluate them led him inevitably, in such cases as we have just quoted, to something like clumsy caricature.

Stalin, he was told, does not like the way he is being "glorified," but "since I have been back, an anti-Socialist Russian expressed the same opinion: 'The situation is so tense, they have to have an ikon!'" And Wilson does not scruple to adopt this word of the "anti-Stalinist Russian back home" as he skeptically wonders "how are the young people, as the Russians become better educated and more capable of thinking for themselves, going to react to the ikon?" (Curious ikon that encourages education against itself.)

Finally the reader is embarrassed as this obsession drives Wilson to do violence to his own standards of critical integrity in the use of sources when he repeats, in good faith, the slanderous vileness which a certain Boris Souvarin gathered into a book on Stalin from all the degenerate *émigré* dens of Europe—"in prison he instituted the killing of prisoners whom he charged with being stool pigeons, but against whom nothing was actually known."

It would seem that before the wise, quizzical, wary eyes of Stalin, which have seen so much, Wilson cannot retain his composure. For a writer this is bad, since it causes him to substitute vindictiveness for reasonableness, and his prepossessions for observation. As a result, the best things in the book are those he records as an artist keeping his eye on the object, and the most questionable, those he garnered from the speculations of certain "anti-Stalinist Russians back home." He *observed* that "the relation between Stalin and his proletarian public is very close and strong. . . . There seems a real identification of will between Stalin and a central element of the people in whose name he speaks." But his *speculations* on how the Russian people "fear Stalin" have their origin in impressions out of Souvarin's book. These conclusions are thus warped because they do not flow reasonably from his observations, and are the result of the uncritical acceptance of hearsay. Since one of the achievements of his method is the skillful mingling of concepts with observation, he pays a penalty as an artist whenever he offends the balance between them.

This leap from observation to unwarranted inference is most startling in his conclusion that there are "feudal elements" in the socialism of the Soviet, that these are not inevitable in socialism as a system, and that "American Republican institutions, disastrously as they are always being abused, have some permanent and absolute value." He adds coolly that "we shall be in no position to reprove the Russians till we shall be able to show them an American Socialism free from Russian defects." *Now there is a decided difference between American democracy as a traditional idealism of the people and the actualities of our capitalist republican institutions.* Democratic American idealism is a real political force and Communists are learning how to value it. But in the end, it will be the capitalist republican institutions that will stand in the way of embodying American democratic idealism in the all-embracing democracy of socialism. The forces of counter-revolution, Engels pointed out, can find a rallying point at a given historic moment around the banner of republican democracy. It is the *tradition* of democracy which has a permanent and absolute value—the *institutions* of democracy as we know them today certainly have not. And this can be affirmed without rejecting in advance the certainty that American democratic institutions, with all the limitations inherent in their bourgeois class character, will introduce variations in the path of American revolutionary development without altering the fundamental fact of the necessity for the ultimate seizure of power from one class by another.

What is the secret of the duality which blurs the keenness of his perception and introduces even an overtone of anguish in his explorations?

In a lecture delivered thirty years ago, André Gide, the noble and subtle French writer, put his finger on the malady which hampered the intellectuals of his generation as *"the fear of losing one's personality."* And in an extraordinary passage, Gide magnificently hurls himself against this delusion, exclaiming, "A truly great man has only one wish, to become as human as possible—or, rather, let us put it better, to become ordinary [*"devenir banal"*]. Shakespeare, Goethe, Molière, Balzac, Tolstoi—they desired to be

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ordinary. And, most admirably, it was thus that they became most individual, while those who fly from humanity for themselves, become only solitary, bizarre, defective." It is curious that Gide, whose intellectual life has also been a searching for solid ground under his feet, should today find his home in Communism ("because it permits the expression of human forces still unexpressed"), and that Wilson, on the same quest, should not yet have found it. I believe this is because, despite his earnestness and his keenness, he carries the burden of that fear which Gide noted, and which, ironically enough, no one in America has more thoroughly anatomized than Wilson himself. The reader will remember that Wilson, in his *Axel's Castle,* one of the most impressive achievements of contemporary criticism, bared the cult of solitariness, the increasing separation from the life of society, which characterizes the inner sickness of modern bourgeois literature. I think that Wilson himself carries the incubus of this solitariness, the recoil from the people. He tells us so himself. It is the explanation of the magnificence of his tribute to socialism and his disquiet in the presence of those who achieved it. It explains also, I think, why his ordinarily good judgment does not seem able to cope with the contagion of that exiled political sect whose moral basis is the substitution of revolutionary-seeming frenzy for revolutionary calculation, pseudo-revolutionary unction for revolutionary responsibility.

There is a ruminating passage in which he recalls Oblomov, weighted down with a sense of paralyzing futility, "trying to make up his mind whether or not to get up in the morning." There is something of bitterness in his confession that follows: "I had done the same thing myself. . . ." Everywhere he sought the tangential, heterodox, disquieted people, driven by that habit of skepticism which, for all its salty healthiness in an atmosphere of oppression, cannot rise to any sort of triumphant affirmation and becomes meaningless where there is freedom. He wonders "whether writers shouldn't always be at odds with society." (Gide, too, has said that the creation of art implies the overcoming of resistance. But antagonism is between the fluidity of life and the form of art, not between the artist and society.) He exclaims against the "mythology" of the People or the Masses, and cries out for the "accuracy of insight, courage of judgment, that are worth all the names in all the books," forgetting in his fear what he himself must know, that these precious virtues can have meaning only in relation to a given position, a passionately avowed social objective. One remembers Marx's penetrating axiom which destroys the bourgeois-liberal liberated philosophy which, because it posits an antagonism between the individual and society, taking no account of their mutual interaction and interdependence, in the end can "achieve only the position of a single individual in civic society." But the position of a "single individual," whatever the accuracy of his insight or the courage of his judgment, is no longer tenable in modern society. Solitude is legitimate—a society where it would be impossible would be unendurable. But solitariness is, as Aragon, the French Communist poet has said, "a curse born of property." Solitude, specialization, individuality, are not antithetic to socialism, they are components of it. Socialism does not mean that one must live in crowds. It implies a system where the relation of every individual to the mass is such that the greatest differentiation of the individual and his triumphs are in conformity with the good of the common life. Without this continuous relation with society, solitude becomes malformed, terrifying.

And so in the end, he comes home, profoundly stirred, giving to the Soviet Union the superb tribute, "Here you are at the moral top of the world, where the light never really goes out," but still without having sundered the fear that keeps him wary of the many-millioned mass, that is reluctant that he shall enjoy, without sacrifice, his beautiful idiosyncratic differences.

MILTON HOWARD.

The Tradition of the People

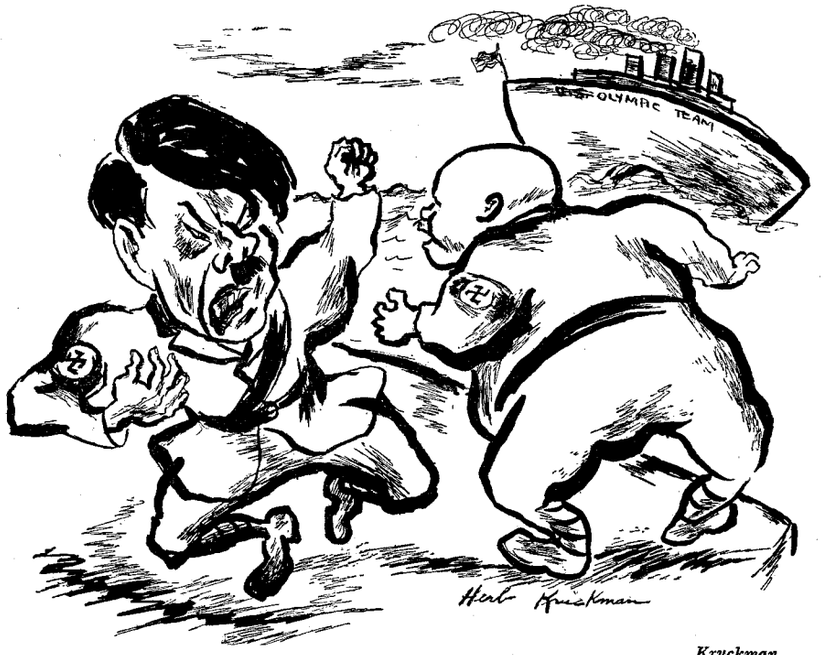
THE PEOPLE, YES, by Carl Sandburg. Harcourt, Brace & Co. $2.50.

BOOK reviewers have a certain amount of humility; not much. They don't like to say "You must read this book." So they say "This book ought to be required reading" for delphinium growers or women over forty or inhabitants of Louisiana or professors of elementary exegetics. It means the same thing. When you say that *The Big Money* ought to be required reading for stockbrokers you mean that the fat boys with the Saturday sunburns, who have gotten their mortgaged motorboats out of hock and have begun again this summer to commute to Oyster Bay with the feel of the hot cash in their check books, would richly profit from a reading of the life of Charley Anderson.

Even a non-book-reviewer may take advantage of the figure of speech with Carl Sandburg's *The People, Yes. The People, Yes* ought to be required reading for every man in every American metropolis who thinks of himself as a radical. It will teach him something. It will teach him that the tradition of the people is not dead in this republic. It will teach him, further, that that tradition is the tradition upon which he must build if he wishes to build a social revolution which will succeed.

Both those facts are of essential importance. The revolutionary movement in America at the present is in a very unenviable position. It has missed the lives of the people. At a time when the country is full of discontent, when oppressed men and women who have no clear idea of the kind of change they want are nevertheless restless with the desire for change, the revolutionary movement has lost the leadership of the discontented to demagogues like Coughlin and aimless well-wishers like Lemke and pale-eyed promisers of the moon like Dr. Townsend. It is no satisfaction to say, We are right and they are wrong. It is no satisfaction in the world of politics to be right, on a mountain.

The reason why the revolutionary movement finds itself in this position is well known to everyone who remembers the last fifteen years. Fifteen years ago American radicals believed Mencken when he wrote of the great American boob. They did not perceive that Mencken in sneering at the



Kruckman

"Tell Hearst he's got to put a stop to this Negro menace!"

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boobocracy was sneering also at the people, nor that Mencken, in ridiculing the Owners, was doing the Owners' work. All that is clear now. It is clear now that the weakening of the American faith in American democracy did not lead, as was foolishly hoped, to the substitution of a different democracy but to the threat of democracy's opposite. Mencken is now highly visible in his own colors. It is apparent that his actual effect was to poison the belief of the people in themselves and to open the way for the kind of cynical and violent suppression of the people which is now preparing.

But fifteen years ago it was not clear. Fifteen years ago the people were fools and the democratic tradition was dead and the only thing to be done was to introduce a new tradition of world revolution stated in hard-headed, realistic terms. The intelligent men, the leaders, realized that the democratic tradition must also be part of the tradition of any revolution to be made in America, but the run of American radicals in the twenties threw out the baby with the bath. American history was for the D.A.R. Their revolution would make its own history.

That kind of talk was harmless as long as the radical movement, coasting on the impulse of the war, retained the offensive: the Owners were nervous and diffident and there was nothing much to be feared but the Red-baiters. It ceased to be harmless when the Owners recovered their courage and took back the offensive in Italy and then in Germany and then elsewhere. When that happened radical leaders in America began to take stock of the actual situation. What they discovered did not comfort them. The tough, realistic twig of world revolution which had been brought into America two or three generations before by courageous and hopeful men was still a twig kept alive in water. It had not been grafted to the tree. Until it was grafted to the tree it would put forth no leaves.

It was then that attempts began to be made to notch the twig into the American past. First chosen was the past of the American Revolution. The Washington Elm and the Charter Oak were to be claimed for the true democratic revolution which had collapsed when Hamilton seized power and which was now to be revived. It was a just and honorable attempt and it failed to succeed only because every American political candidate who ever shouted over a jug of water on a school-house desk had made precisely the same claim for himself. American candidates and American parties have always been the true heirs of the founding fathers and the radical movement in making the same claim for itself merely joined a long and none too honorable procession. It made no difference that the twig of revolution notched perfectly into the great American elm of 1776. The great American elm of 1776 had been hauled off by the Davey Tree Surgeons to the green lawn of the duPonts and the heavy branches had been trimmed down to shade a well-bred cocktail party of the Very Few.

We find ourselves still in that dilemma. We hold in our hands the growing thing, the true shelter for a great people and yet it will neither grow nor shelter until it is grafted to the green wood of the people's lives. It is to us, and at this time, that Sandburg speaks. What he says to those who have attempted to spell the name of their own cause out of the cracked letters of the Liberty Bell is this: Why turn back? Why say the people were right *then?* Why not say the people are right still?

> "The people," said a farmer's wife in a Minnesota country store where her husband was buying a new post-hole digger.
> "The people." she went on, "will stick around a long time."

What he says to those who talk and write in the cities is this: Why not know the people? There are many men in the great cities in America who do not know the people. There are also many men in the great cities who do not understand that it is necessary, in order to know the people, to know their country. The people in America as in any other country are bred as well of the land as of their fathers and mothers. Because the Nazis have made much of this relation it does not follow that it is not a relation which exists. If every human emotion to which Hitler has laid particular claim is to be surrendered to him, the revolution will have to express itself in the abstract symbols of pure mathematics. I remember being told recently by a group of young men at City College that love of the land was a childish emotion to be put aside with childhood. Intellectualism and faintheartedness could scarcely go farther. People belong to their countrysides. There is a story told of two New York photographers of great skill who went out into the Plains to make a moving picture of the life of the farmers and who expected to find there the peasants of whom they had read in books on Russia and who were disillusioned and angry to find that the farmers of the Plains were not peasants at all but something very different for which they could discover no word in their books.

What Sandburg does first of all for these men in the great cities is to show them the people against the land.

> and in the shivering cold they say
> "Between Amarilla and the North Pole
> is only a barb wire fence,"

And again:

> The people know what the land knows
> the numbers odd and even of the land
> the slow hot wind of summer and its withering
> or again the crimp of the driving white blizzard
> and neither of them to be stopped
> neither saying anything else than:
> "I'm not arguing. I'm telling you."

What he does next is to show them the people themselves. He does not pretend to superior knowledge.

> Who shall speak for the people?
> Who knows the works from A to Z so he can say,
> "I know what the people want?" Who is this phenom? where did he come from?

He shows the people in their language, in their proverbs, in the hang of their talk, in the twists of thinking which are peculiarly theirs. Out of the book comes the true smell and sound of humanity, the warm, endless, unending movement of men. It is the smell and the sound and the movement of all men everywhere. But it is also the smell and the sound and the movement of men on this continent. Out of the book comes for the first time in our literature the people of America. Whitman's men were Man. Sandburg's are men of this earth. It has taken our generation a long time to admit that we were not only a nation but a *people*. Now we are. The People. Yes.

But what Sandburg does for us particularly is more even than that. He points out the living tree to which the branch may be grafted. He points out the one great tradition in American life strong enough and live enough to carry the revolution of the oppressed. That tradition is the belief *in* the people. That is the tree against which the cat-calling satirists of the twenties broke their claws.

America has always been dedicated in words to the belief in the people. The revolution against England was made by men who believed in the people—who were the people. But that dedication in words has always been betrayed in fact. The men who wrote the Constitution did not believe in the people and only the fear of Jefferson prevented them from rooting out of their document every generous and democratic word.

> Into the Constitution of the United States they wrote a fear
> In the form of "checks and balances," "proper restraints"
> On the people so whimsical and changeable,
> So variable in mood and weather. . . .
>
> Men of "solid substance" wore velvet knickerbockers
> And shared snuff with each other in greetings.
> One of these made a name for himself with saying
> You could never tell next what was coming from the people:
> "Your people, sir, your people is a great beast,"
> Speaking for those afraid of the people. . . .

For better than a century, in the Supreme Court and in the Congress the country has been ruled by those who did not believe in the people. Men like Lincoln who did believe were used by those who came after them, as Lincoln has been used by the owners of the Republican Party, to polish up the Big Words for the further deceit of the citizens. For a hundred years and more the country has been ruled by those who used the language of belief in the people to exploit the people. And yet through all that time, says Sandburg, the belief of the people in themselves has endured. It is alive. It is strong. It needs only the new branch to leaf out and be green.

The revolutionary party which can sup-

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that belief and give it new form, the olutionary party which can offer to re- e the government to the people and which convince the people of its sincerity in so ring, the revolutionary party which can bring to pass the great American dream of the commonwealth, the people's state—that revolutionary party will inherit the history of this country and change it into truth.

ARCHIBALD MACLEISH.

Wisdom and Insight

E FLOWERING OF NEW ENG- AND, by Van Wyck Brooks. E. P. utton & Co. $4.

F this book I can only say, as Brooks says of Prescott's *Ferdinand and Isa- ,* "One might well ask for different gs, but one could scarcely ask for any- g better." With *The Flowering of New E- land,* Brooks's talent appears in its full- bloom, and I do not see how anyone today deny that he is, and for twenty rs has been, the most fruitful literary ic in America. This is not to say that I ard him as, in Eliot's phrase, "the perfect tic," but he is the least imperfect we have as far seen. His imperfections are impor- nt; to most readers of the NEW MASSES ey must seem, as they do to me, to set a efinite and regrettable limit to Brooks's par- cipation in the future growth of American literature; but in our present situation they have only a relative significance. Not only does Brooks tower above his contemporaries, all of them guilty of the same imperfections; he reveals to younger writers—I am thinking particularly, of course, of the Marxists—that, though they may have found a way to remedy his particular defects, they are far from having realized the manifold obligations and possibilities of literary criticism.

The Flowering of New England describes the astonishing renaissance of the half-century before Appomattox. Beginning with the Boston of Gilbert Stuart, the codfish aristocracy, and colonial culture, Brooks sets forth the first signs of the change: the coming of the German influence, the rise of Webster, Channing, and Everett, the appearance of Bancroft and Prescott. It is almost impossible to describe his method, the combination of erudition and insight that enables him always to write from within the cultural situation he describes. He slips easily from Stuart to John Quincy Adams to Andrews Norton to Nathaniel Bowditch to Theodore Dwight to Noah Webster. By the time we come to George Ticknor and Edward Everett, first of the pilgrims to Germany, we are ready to understand the effect on the New England mind of German erudition and German idealistic philosophy.

The story of the early years, presented in terms of the experiences of a score or more of writers, paves the way for the renaissance itself. Brooks is generous to Longfellow, recognizing not only that he had more virtues than it is now fashionable to admit but also that his influence on the literary growth of New England was of great historical importance. But he reserves his highest praise and his finest powers of interpretation for Hawthorne, Emerson, and Thoreau. They are seen as part of a vital growth. Their world includes philosophers, historians, the reformers of Brook Farm. Alcott, Margaret Fuller, Brownson, Ripley, Elizabeth Peabody, Christopher Cranch, Ellery Channing, Richard Henry Dana, Motley, Parkman, Lowell, Dr. Holmes—Brooks touches all these and dozens more with a respectful intimacy that makes us know their lives as well as their books. From the furthest corners of New England, as well as from Boston, Cambridge, and Concord, he draws evidence of growth and power. As he unfolds it, the story of this renaissance is exciting, even romantic. Greater writers have, no doubt, flourished in one place and period, but has there ever been a more sudden and startling burst of talent? Out of apparently barren soil came, in two generations, a literature that deserved and won the respect of the world.

What Brooks has given us, first of all, is a masterly piece of interpretation. In describing the novels, poems, essays, and histories, he is not merely just; he is consistently revealing and stimulating. Thus he performs the first task of the critic: he takes a body of literature, much of it grown unfamiliar, and makes it once more a part of the imaginative experience of the American people. And, more than this, he shows us the intellectual life out of which this literature grew. Nothing in the book is more amazing than its wealth of detail, the knowledge it shows of the thoughts, emotions, and interests of hundreds of authors. This knowledge comes, of course, from biographies, journals, and letters, read not merely with scholarship but also with imagination. It enables Brooks to show the renaissance as a complex whole. A writer is never presented as an atomic individual; always we see how his mind is being acted upon by and is acting upon others. With this grasp of relationships, Brooks can carry effortlessly the burden of his erudition, moving easily from writer to writer, unifying great masses of information, presenting his story in a style that has ease and flexibility and distinction.

It seems unfair to demand more than this, but I am afraid we must. I have said that Brooks is careful never to give the impression that a writer can be an isolated entity; every writer he shows to be part of a social process. But that process is, except on rare occasions, presented as wholly intellectual, imaginative, cultural. Minds, Brooks shows, influence minds, as most certainly they do. But is this, as he seems to suggest, a closed circle? Are minds independent of material circumstances? Brooks writes as if they were, or rather, as if any relationships that might be found to exist were of no importance for his purposes.

Leaving theoretical objections to one side, I believe his interpretation would be more valuable, would make the literary history of his period even more vivid and significant to us, if he showed the relation of cultural to political and economic activity. In one of the few passages that hint at such a relation, he say "In all these centres of the seaboard lif there had arisen a buffer generation that l between the hard old Puritan ways and t minds of the younger people." He kno vaguely, that this buffer generation was ma up of the merchant princes and those the carried to prosperity with them, but he r fuses to see that here lies a body of facts th might be significantly related to the nomena that are his special concern. I not suggesting that a direct connectio be shown between the tonnage carried in Massachusetts bottoms and the appearance of Ralph Waldo Emerson, but I do think there are some pertinent questions that might be asked. Why did the merchant princes turn away from Puritanism, even formally rejecting it, as many of them did when they embraced Unitarianism? How does it happe that, in New England, theological radical became associated with social conservati How far was the theological radicali of the codfish aristocracy, as it was pass on to the next generation, colored by com mercial interests? To what extent did the generation of Emerson and Thoreau revolt against the ideas of the merchants and to what extent did they take them over? Was this process affected by the fact that mercantile capitalism was being transformed into industrial capitalism? In their revolt against the mercantile philosophy, were the New England writers affected by the rise of the common man, the emergence of Jacksonian democracy? These are only a few of the questions that I think it would be interesting to have answered. If such questions were answered, we should, I believe, have an even stronger feeling for the literature of the period than Brooks, with all his gifts, ca impart to us. And they are questions tha Brooks's fine imagination could have answered if he had thought them important.

If Brooks had asked these questions, perhaps he would have had a better answer for a question that he is forced to ask: why did the New England renaissance flourish so briefly? He tries to explain its decline by reference to Spengler's thesis of the culture-cycle. I am skeptical about both the thesis and its applicability to this situation. I see moreover, a much more obvious explanation During the fifty years from 1815 to 186 the economic basis of New England life wa changing from agriculture and commerce t industry. This change affected the habits the ruling class, altered the way of life of large section of the population, destroyed t religious and racial homogeneity of the gion, and ended the possibility of maintaini the cultural semi-independence that N England had previously enjoyed. The cha

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was so rapid that writers could not adjust themselves to it. They went on making the old assumptions, and the old assumptions were no longer valid. The post-Civil War writers in New England were not facing the world as their predecessors had faced it. More and more, to protect the assumptions hey cherished, they built bulwarks against eality. The process was infinitely varied and omplicated, and I cannot even suggest it; ut Brooks could have shown it in something e its entirety, if he had thought it imrtant to do so.

And it is important. The more we undertand the forces that enter into the creation literature, the more fully we can respond it. Moreover, the point of understanding world is to be able to change it. So far erature is concerned, Brooks would ad- this. It is he, after all, who invented the phrase, "the usable past." One of his great services has been the shaping of a tradition that could contribute to the growth of American literature. But if literature is closely related to social conditions, then the clarification of a tradition, the establishing of standards, and the preaching of artistic integrity—important though they all are—are not enough. Ultimately, some of us believe, the only thing that can save literature is drastic social reconstruction.

But I come back, after asking for different things, to the statement that the book, taken for what it is, could scarcely be better. I wish that Brooks had felt the importance of looking farther afield, because I know how valuable his perceptions would be, but, after all, we can, in a rough way, supply the deficiency. And what we do get from the book is something that only a man with Brooks's patience, wisdom, and insight could give us. To put it quite simply, he has read these hundreds of books, and, as he speaks to us of them, those we have read take on new meaning and even those we have not, become, in some measure, part of our cultural being. This is a service for which we, who believe in Communism as the heir of the finest American traditions, cannot be too grateful.

GRANVILLE HICKS.

Two Views of Imperialism

E RAPE OF AFRICA, by Lamar Middleton. Maps and Charts. Random House. $3.00.

ACIFIC ADVENTURE, by Willard Price. Illustrated. Reynal & Hitchcock. $3.00.

HERE are two books that excellently illustrate the shortcomings of the journalist's informal method. They are easy to d, but just as easy to forget. Avoiding c treatment, avoiding attempts to interre te what they observe with economic and political drifts—the procedure that lifted George Seldes, Vincent Sheean, and John Gunther above the journalist's level—these writers fall into easy attitudes.

Each deals with an aspect of imperialism. The attitude Mr. Middleton falls into is oral indignation; Mr. Price's attitude is one of tolerance toward a necessary evil. To demonstrate, as Mr. Middleton does, that diplomacy is hypocritical, touches only a surface of the subject. It would be well for him to read Lenin's classic work on imperialism. As for Mr. Price, his reading assignment would be far more voluminous.

In 1876, Mr. Middleton points out, the territory controlled by imperialist European powers in Africa totaled 10 percent of the total area; by 1936 all native rule had vanished unless we except an insignificant fragment, Liberia, virtually a protectorate of the Firestone interests. The rush began immediately after 1876, when the reports of Stanley's explorations filtered through and e promoter-king, Leopold of Belgium, lacking a big navy, resorted to big talk and to aying the big powers off against each other. is "Committee for the Study of the Upper ongo," of which the students were all financiers, was the perfect example of the hypocrisy under which the imperialist powers, using the pretexts of "scientific exploration" and "improvement of the conditions of the natives," carried out the theft of the continent.

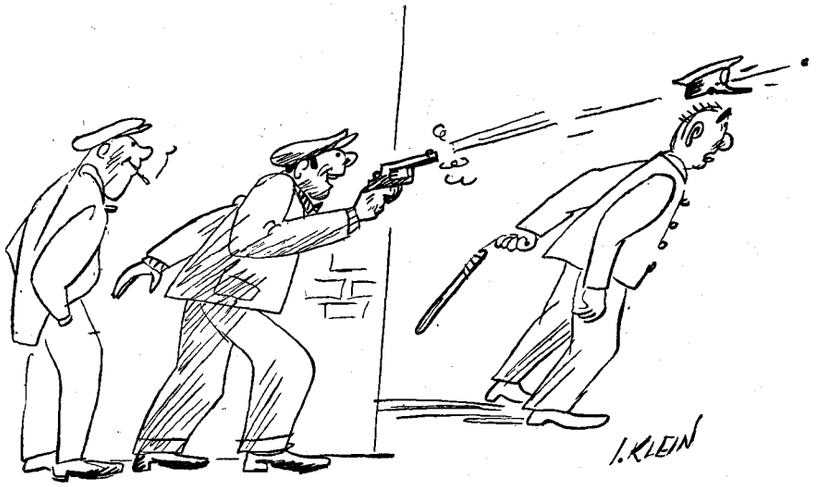
Mr. Middleton explains in his foreword that, "The writer has given some part of the diplomatic background of the pillage of a continent by Europeans during the last sixty years. Of colonial invasions and military campaigns in Africa there is parenthetical treatment only. . . . This informal history is a study of one aspect of the gentle art of acquisitive diplomacy—or, more simply, of hypocrisy."

The author, however, was unwise to so limit himself; and he reduces his work to superficiality by so simplifying it as to make it, as he actually does, a study of diplomatic hypocrisy. The partition of Africa contributed to the World War, and, as the tension over Ethiopia revealed, will probably detonate other international explosions. This is as far as Mr. Middleton goes in sketching the political background. Nor does he give any picture of the economic stakes or the industrial and cultural revolution that European penetration has brought about in Africa. Isolated from its broader interrelationships and its deeper economic and social causes and consequences, this study of diplomatic hypocrisy is, therefore, of minor value. With it should be read the unashamed book of the "great" British administrator, Sir Harry Johnston, entitled *The Colonization of Africa,* where the map of that continent is realistically delimited into exploitable and colonizable areas, a book which plots the ethnographic map into "docile and stubborn" races, and which, with unintended frankness, elaborates the "ethics" of imperialism which Mussolini has made use of, to wit, that land belongs not to its natives but to those who can develop it commercially and industrially —that is, to the imperialist invader.

Now to Mr. Price's book. In one of the early pages he jocularly lists the purely formal courtesies shown him as all the "favors" officially extended. The list is intended to show that his complimentary treatment of Japan's rule in its Pacific mandate is not a return for favors received.

The mandate covers some 1400 islands in the Pacific Ocean. They make a wall, in Japanese hands, around the eastern shore of Asia. The book gives a favorable report of Japanese rule over the natives and Japanese enterprise in developing the islands' resources; it scouts the idea that Japan is violating mandate provisions by fortifying the islands; it declares that by the effective step of populating the islands—already Japanese immigrants outnumber the natives—the islands have become Japanese and therefore are not likely to see any further imperialist transfers. There are suggestions of pro-Japanese bias in the book, but it becomes plain in one of the final paragraphs.

"They [the Japanese] have amply proven their ability to get and keep order in Manchuria, Korea, Formosa, the South Seas as well as in the Japanese homeland." Has Mr. Price read of the Japanese officer who a few days ago committed suicide because he



"Boy oh boy, how the C.M.T.C. has improved my aim!" *I. Klein*

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had been outwitted by a troop of Manchurian rebels? Has Mr. Price forgotten the recent assassinations in Japan itself? Has he heard of the virtually complete suppression of public expression? Mr. Price goes on, "They [the Japanese] are obviously quite correct in their contention that China needs to be stabilized"—which the Japanese are doing by breaking up China's territorial stability in military invasions, her economic stability by forced loans and smuggling, her social stability by forcing the cultivation and use of opium. Mr. Price is naïve; or being imperialist-minded himself, he can appreciate a good job of imperialism.

ISIDOR SCHNEIDER.

Brief Reviews

SOCIAL SCIENCE: TEXTBOOK FOR ELEMENTARY AND MIDDLE SCHOOLS, by M. Ovsyannikova, B. Levitan, S. Ushakov, A. Alexandrov, V. Nekrasova. Translated from the textbooks approved by the People's Commissariat of Education of the R.S.F.S.R. Part I, 3rd grade, 25 cents; Part II, 5th grade, 35 cents. New York. Wholesale Book Corporation, Inc. Printed in Moscow. 1935. "In our country all power belongs to the workers and peasants. . . . In other countries the power belongs to the capitalists." This is the way in which Soviet school children are introduced to history; and at the end of the course represented by these two beginners' texts the coming rulers of the Soviet Union find it entirely natural to answer such questions as "What bequests did Lenin leave the Communist Party and all toilers?" "What does industrialization of the country mean?" "Why is it impossible to build socialism without reorganizing the petty individual peasant farms?" and "What part did Stalin play in the collectivization of agriculture?" From the point of view of American educators (even the left-wingers) these two examples of Soviet pedagogy suffer from too exclusive an emphasis upon Russian history: a defect largely avoided in the more comprehensive *History of Feudalism* by Gukovsky and Trachtenberg in the same series of texts. Also, there is a tendency to confuse legitimate propaganda with a rather tiresome note of edification, and we can only hope that the original Russian is less crude and jarring than the translation suggests. Such English as "The whole life of Lenin was *subjected to one object*" and "The working class of the Soviet Union responded to the death of Lenin *by 200,000 proletarians joining* the Party" and "Lenin possessed an enormous ability *to quickly grasp. . . .* " is quite inexcusable, and can only serve to strengthen the utterly erroneous idea that workers are incapable of adequately using the powerful means of the written and spoken word. HAROLD WARD.

A HOUSE IN VIENNA, by Marianne Philips, translated from the Dutch by Irene Clephane and David Hallett. Harcourt Brace & Co. $2. In this novel one follows a day in the lives of an amiable landlord, a poor violinist, a count who has returned from America and a secretary's job, a retired opera star, a cafeteria cashier in love with the count, an idealistic boy about to become a Communist, and a reasonable, but not very human, Communist. All but the latter stay at the house in Vienna.

The one credible incident in the book tells of the Communist's successful effort to stop a group of Jewish students from taking useless, personal vengeance upon two Nazis who have castrated a friend. Here, for a moment, the author is carried away by her theme, forgets the sugary style she generally uses, and writes movingly. This episode, however, is almost completely submerged beneath the weight of many pages that detail the trivial happenings in the day of the other singularly uninteresting characters.

HARCOURT WEBB.

The Screen

Verona Comes to Hollywood

THERE is no denying the fact that Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer's *Romeo and Juliet* (Astor Theater) is an impressive pageant and at times a physically exciting motion picture. It contains the best dueling sequences since *The Mark of Zorro*. And the lines, emasculated though they are, are nevertheless still Shakespeare's great poetry.

It was impossible that this film would not be impressive. There is $2,000,000 worth of production value here. Irving Thalberg saw to it that the Bard should have nothing but the best of everything. Before production started he sent two cameramen to Verona and had them make photographs of all the fifteenth-century museum pieces. He hired Professor William Strunk, Jr., of Cornell to see that not a word of Shakespeare was rewritten. Oliver Messell, the costume designer, claims to have used Botticelli, Benozzo Gozzoli, Carpacci, Fra Angelico, Bellini, Signoreli, and others as his source material. To his list his coworker, Adrian, adds Michelangelo, Leonardo, Raphael, Bramante, and Peruzzi. Cedric Gibbons, who is responsible for the sets, used Brunelleschi, Pisano, Cimabue, etc. Thalberg gathered around Norma Shearer and Leslie Howard an array of stars that makes *Grand Hotel* look like a small-town boarding house. Talbot Jennings, of *Mutiny on the Bounty* fame, wrote a mechanically expert scenario and George Cukor directed Shakespeare with the same respectful manner he exhibited toward *Little Women* and *David Copperfield*. But in spite of this reverential care to preserve the letter and form of the original, the result is more Irving Thalberg's than Shakespeare's.

The real reason for this is that all the research and care has given us a Renaissance Verona accurate in many details, but as dead as a museum piece. The actors recite their lines with respect and sometimes with feeling, but they are members of this huge pageant instead of living human beings. The film doesn't succeed in transmitting a realistic portrait of the Renaissance. And this is the major tragedy of the film, since the medium is especially suited for the job. The minor roles illustrate this: Friar John is reduced to a minor character and is conceived like the typical Hollywood mad scientist. The apothecary is the usual movie diabolical man. In discussing his work on the costumes, Adrian says that "*Romeo and Juliet* will give to the world a truer conception of the period than ever before." Unfortunately this is not so. It takes more than $2,000,000 of production value and perfect Hollywood machine to do that.

While the film is certainly of high caliber, it is not the great film the producers would have us believe. In the eyes of certain people Metro's Leo (the trademark) may have earned his slogan, "Ars Gratia Artis," with *Romeo and Juliet*, but it is certainly not a memorable film. Metro has really given us two films (not from classical sources) that will be remembered long after the film version of *Romeo and Juliet* is forgotten: *Greed*, of the silent cinema, and Fritz Lang's *Fury*.

At the Roxy this week Gaumont-British's *Seven Sinners*, with Edmund Lowe and Constance Cummings, appears as a lively combination of *The Thin Man* and *39 Steps*. It is full of good humor and lively direction. At the Rialto the brilliant German actor, Fritz Kortner, continues to waste his time in a third-rate British thriller called *The Crouching Beast*.

PETER ELLIS.

Theatrical Notes

WITH the *Black Pit*, Albert Maltz's three-act play about the coal mines, in rehearsal, the Chicago Repertory Group has launched its drive for two thousand "audience members" to make the year's program financially possible. This membership at one dollar a year carries a 10 percent discount on two tickets to all productions and affairs of the group for one year.

T. V. Smith, Illinois State Senator, Clarence Darrow, and John Fitzpatrick, president of the Chicago Federation of Labor, are among the sponsors of the Chicago Repertory Group. Others are Robert Morss Lovett, John Baird, director Northwestern University theater; Lillian Herstein, American Federation of Teachers; Agnes Nester, Women's Trade Union League; Saraine Loewe, of the Illinois Farmer-Party; Harriet Monroe, editor of *Poetry: A Magazine of Verse*, and a number of academic and professional theatrical authorities.

The New Theatre League, founders and publishers of *New Theatre magazine*, announces a new quarterly publication, *Theatre Workshop*, to appear in September. The purpose of the new publication is to provide serious theater workers, both professional and non-professional, with full-length technical studies on the practice, theory, and history of the theater arts. It will be edited from the viewpoint of the practising worker. *Theatre Workshop* is planned as a ninety-six page book on one subject for each issue. The initial number is devoted entirely to the art of acting. Two features in the first number will be "The Work of the Actor," by I. Rapoport of the Vakhtangov Theater, Moscow, and "Primary Elements in the Actor's Art," by I. Y. Sudakov. The editors say that the new magazine's policy will resemble in some respects that of Gordon Craig's *Mask*. Mark Marvin, national secretary of the New Theatre League, is editor

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of the new magazine. The associate editors are Barrett Clark, John Howard Lawson, Harry Elion, Lee Strasberg, Mordecai Gorelik, and Ben Blake as European editor.

Two more prize contests are announced, as follows:

With Rabbi Jonah B. Wise of New York, Mordecai Soltes, National Director of Education of the Jewish Welfare Board, and an as yet unrevealed group of theatrical people acting as judges, a play contest has been launched by the New Theatre League.

The contest offers a $100 prize and production of the prize-winning play for the best one-act script submitted before November 15. The script must deal specifically with Jewish life, and must be social in theme. Full details of the contest may be secured upon request from New Theatre League, P. O. Box 300, Grand Central Annex, New York City.

The repertory department of the Activities Council for Youth Organizations announces a contest for original dramatic monologues dealing with youth problems. The sponsors want short, pointed, dramatic presentations of the problems of youth, especially those giving humorous or satirical treatment of anti-war or anti-fascist content.

A volume of these will be published in the fall. All contributions will be eligible for inclusion in this volume, and the best script will be awarded a prize of ten dollars. The contest begins immediately and no script will be accepted after September 30. Monologues must be submitted to the Repertory Department of the Activities Council, Room 1606, 80 Fifth Avenue, New York City.

A subscription drive for $10,000 has been opened by Artef, the Yiddish proletarian art theater, whose season will begin early in October with a production of Sholom Aleichem's *$100,000*. The subscription drive, Artef states, has received the endorsement of the national executive committee of the International Workers Order. Ranging from one to twenty-five dollars, the subscription rates offer reduction on tickets and, in the highest bracket, provide an unlimited season pass.

Followers of the left-wing theater—and, for that matter, of the progress of the W.P.A. theater project—will be interested to know that the Anglo-Jewish division of the Jewish Theater Project has on schedule for early production *Dr. Mamlock*, by Friedrich Wolf, author of *The Sailors of Cattaro*.

Between Ourselves

IMPORTANT changes are in the offing for the NEW MASSES. Beginning with the issue of September 15, the magazine will appear in a new format which will signalize other equally important changes in the publication as a whole: new features, new contributors—in general, improvements which we hope will enable us better to fulfill our task of exerting a decisive influence on the American middle class for peace, freedom, and progress.

Paul Nizan is a well-known French philosopher and novelist who is at present foreign editor of *l'Humanité*, official organ of the French Communist Party.

As a consequence of a regrettable typographical error, Maurice English's review, "From Parnell to Connolly," which appeared last week, was made to read at one point: "Parnell, inevitably, was more a victim of workers as 'a most important wing of the future National Army.'" This should have read: "Parnell never went beyond a vision of workers as 'a most important wing of the future National Army.'"

An urgent reminder from the circulation department: Two weeks' notice is required for changes of address. Readers who expect to return from vacation to their permanent city residence are requested to inform the NEW MASSES two weeks in advance, specifying the date of issue for which the change is to go into effect.

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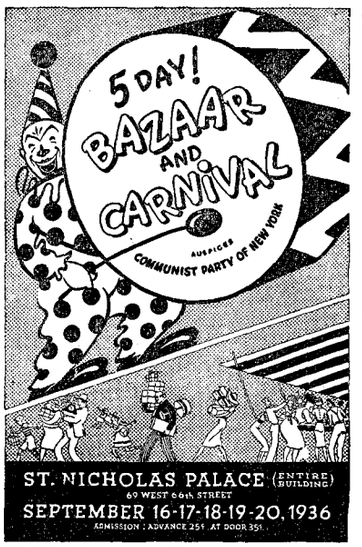
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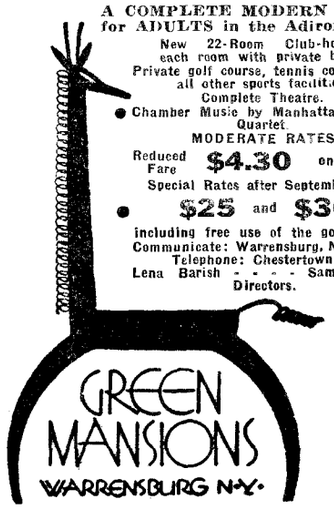

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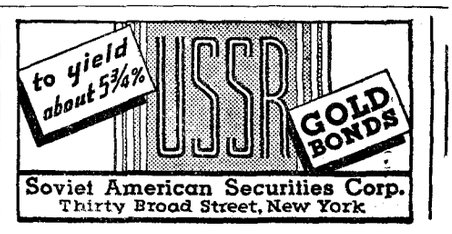

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